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Air Raids Intensifying Over Capital Of Chechnya

Russians Vow to Press Bombing Campaign to Prepare 'Resolute Steps'

By Steven Erlanger

MOSCOW — Russian bombing raids intensified sharply Thursday over Grozny, the capital of Chechnya, as reports of strong dissent within the Russian military command continued to emerge.

At least 24 people were reported to have died in Grozny, the Chechen capital, in a sharp escalation of bombing and shelling that hit apartment blocks as well as more strategic targets, like the Lenin oil refinery, and caused panic in the streets.

Some missiles hit crowds of people who were working to clear away the debris from nighttime bombing. Reuters reported from the city. Among those killed was an American freelance photographer, Cynthia Elbaum, 28.

Russian officials said the intense bombing raids would continue through the night as a prelude to "resolute steps" to try to put a quicker end to what has become a full-blown military and political crisis in Moscow.

At the same time, President Boris N. Yeltsin told the Russian Parliament in a letter that he was preparing a solution to the conflict "based mainly on using political methods" and that he would address the Russian people "in the coming days" with his plans. The Itar-Tass news agency said a group of Yeltsin aides was at work on proposals for a peaceful resolution.

Mr. Yeltsin's statement may have been prompted by new and strong indications that his military commanders are balking at the idea of an all-out assault on Grozny, a town with practically no air defenses.

The semi-official Itar-Tass reported, and retracted, a story detailing a large purge in the Russian command.

The agency, in a report from the Russian military headquarters in Moscow, said that the defense minister, Pavel S. Grachev, relieved six top commanders of their duties for "indecisiveness and inaction," implying that they had opposed the new military line. It said General Grachev would assume full, operative command of the operation against Chechnya, a tiny mountainous state of only 1.3 million people that has been defying Moscow for three years since declaring independence.

The report said the officers who were relieved included First Deputy Defense Minister Georgi Kondratyev and the deputy commander of Russian ground troops

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North Koreans Offer Airspace And Landings

By Andrew Pollack

TOKYO — In what could be another step toward ending its international isolation, North Korea announced Thursday that it was planning to allow commercial airlines from other countries to fly over its territory and land at its airports.

The official North Korean press agency, KCNA, said that North Korea would offer "the facilities and services for appropriate airline operation without discrimination" to foreign aircraft. It said North Korea in particular wanted to establish an air route linking Tokyo and Beijing through Pyongyang, the North Korean capital.

Analysts said the move could improve North Korea's economic relations with the rest of the world, but cautioned that it was unclear how far the Communist nation was willing to go. But some said it appeared North Korea was more interested in letting airlines fly over its territory than in allowing them to provide service to North Korean cities, which would have a much bigger impact on opening up the reclusive nation.

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Rescuers carrying a woman wounded in a raid by Russian bombers on Thursday in the Chechen capital of Grozny.

Russian Troops in No Fighting Mood

By Lee Hockstader

SLEPTSOVSKAYA, Russia — All quiet on the western front — except for the grating of unhappy Russian soldiers.

At a bleak country crossroads an hour's drive from the Chechen capital, Grozny, a sorry little detachment of Russian troops has dug into the frozen ground while the politicians in Moscow argue about their fate.

Few of them want to be here, and fewer still are enticed by the prospect of an assault on Grozny, where several thousand Chechen fighters swear they are ready to kill Russians in the name of Allah.

"Of course it's not worth it," said Alexander, 18, a draftee with a wisp of a mustache. "It's a struggle for power, but soldiers shouldn't be used in a power struggle."

Less than two weeks after they moved into Chechnya, Russian troops in the region are in a funk. Poor morale, frigid weather and political indecision have stalled their advance and sapped their will to fight.

The general in charge of the armored column west of Grozny announced last week he would not advance against Chechen civilians. Anti-Chechen propaganda in Moscow appears to be more damaging to the Russians than the Chechens.

Only sketchy news reports reach the Russian troops, most of them heavy-handed propaganda from Moscow. Several soldiers here said they had heard, for example, that Chechen fighters are being assisted by Afghan mujahidin rebels.

True or not, that information is very likely intended to depict the Chechen drive for independence as under the influence of

Russia's former enemies. But the unintended effect here is to stir anxiety among the troops, who are acutely aware that the mujahidin are experienced fighters who bloodied the Russian nose in Afghanistan.

The poor morale of the Russians is in contrast with the armed defenders in Grozny, whose resolve seems to stiffen with each Russian air raid, artillery bombardment and civilian casualty. The Chechens "are determined to fight at any cost because people are so angry," a Chechen Foreign Ministry spokesman told the BBC on Thursday.

The morale problems further suggest that, despite overwhelming Russian superiority in firepower, any order to storm Grozny will be met with scant enthusiasm.

One young recruit from Volgograd, who

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Markets on Edge as Mexico Floats Peso

By Lawrence Malkin

NEW YORK — Mexico freed the peso on Thursday, letting it float against other currencies as a way to combat speculation.

The United States offered financial support, and investors said the Mexican government was doing the right thing, although rebuilding confidence would take time.

As the peso lost about 14 percent of its value against the dollar, on the heels of a 15 point drop Wednesday, anxiety spread to other Latin American markets that have shared in the boom in so-called emerging economies markets the last few years (Page 11).

Officials in Mexico and other countries, meanwhile, tried to reassure investors,

and the Argentine government emphasized that its currency was linked to the dollar by law.

After the U.S. Treasury activated a \$6 billion facility to help bolster the peso, Finance Minister Jaime Serra Puche of Mexico flew to New York and summoned representatives of an international group of about 70 commercial and investment banks to a meeting in the Federal Reserve Bank of New York attended by Treasury Undersecretary Lawrence Summers.

Mr. Serra Puche, a former commerce minister who moved to his present portfolio when a new government took office Dec. 1, said Mexico's currency adjustments were a one-time measure to deal with speculation.

He pledged that the government

would cut domestic demand by 5 percent and maintain an anti-inflation program with the cooperation of business and labor. This adds up to a classic post-devaluation austerity program, what worries foreign investors is whether the new government of President Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León can keep the social peace to see it through.

After the government angered many foreign fund managers Tuesday by devaluing the peso by 15 percent without warning, the Mexican central bank spent more than \$4 billion buying pesos in an unsuccessful attempt to hold the new rate as foreigners and Mexicans pulled out their money.

Interest yields on government securities

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Subway Suspect Arrested in Burn Ward

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A man critically injured by a firebomb that shot flames through a crowded subway car was arrested in his hospital bed Thursday and charged with attempted murder and assault. Officials said the bomb may have been part of a planned extortion attempt.

Edward J. Leary, 49, an unemployed computer operator from Scotch Plains, New Jersey, was charged with 45 counts. The bomb went off in his hands, and more bomb-making materials were found in his home, Police Commissioner William J. Bratton said.

Mr. Leary was under police guard at the New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, where he was in critical condition with burns to his face, knuckles and legs. He was one of 45 people injured, four critically.

Mr. Bratton said that Mr. Leary evidently planned to use the firebomb in an extortion plot aimed at the Transit Authority.

"Significant evidence," including bomb-making materials recovered at Mr. Leary's New Jersey home, led to that conclusion, Mr. Bratton said.

It was still not clear if the bomb went off accidentally or intentionally, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said.

The explosion of the crude firebomb Wednesday sent holiday shoppers into hysterics and triggered an emergency response that tied up downtown streets for hours. It occurred just one block east of the World Trade Center, where a terrorist bomb killed six people and hurt 1,000 in February 1993.

Governor-elect George Pataki issued a statement urging the death penalty for the person responsible for the firebombing.

John Kijner of The New York Times reported earlier:

The man in the Clark Street subway station in Brooklyn was hurt. His sneakers and the legs of his blue

jeans were singed and shredded, his legs bloody below the knees, Michael Ruiz, a police officer, remembered later. There were burns on his arm, his face and burn marks on his knuckles through the tatters of his gloves.

The two encountered each other about a half-hour after the burst of flame in a crowded No. 4 train injured 45 people as the subway pulled into the Fulton Street station in the Manhattan financial district. Mr. Ruiz and his partner in the 84th Precinct, Anthony Roe, were answering a radio call for aid at the first stop in Brooklyn.

"I'm in pain," the man said, staggering near the token booth. They put him in an ambulance.

Then, as they sped toward the burn unit of New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center, a description came over their radios of a suspect in the subway explosion. They looked at the man riding with them.

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Berlusconi Resigns, Leaving Italy Mired In Political Disarray

By Alan Cowell

ROME — Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi resigned Thursday after seven months in office, confronted by a revolt within his governing alliance that has left Italians facing confusion, possible elections and the near certainty that, whatever their next government, it will not survive for long.

To add to his woes on a bleak day, Mr. Berlusconi's younger brother, Paolo, received a five-month suspended jail term on corruption charges, recalling the scandals that brought down the country's onetime political elite and now haunt its successor.

Mr. Berlusconi handed his resignation to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, who, in turn, "reserved judgment" on whether to accept it, a formality designed to allow Mr. Berlusconi to stay on as caretaker while the president seeks a way out of the impasse.

But the complexities facing Mr. Scalfaro seemed only to deepen with word that the Northern League, the coalition partner that inspired the parliamentary rebellion, had started to split, with some of its 105 lower house deputies remaining loyal to Mr. Berlusconi.

The developments brought the end of Italy's 52d postwar government. But Mr. Berlusconi's resignation also marked the failure of Italy's first attempt to devise a new political system after years of scandal that destroyed a political old guard mired in what investigators believe to have been endemic graft.

Paolo Berlusconi was sentenced in Milan on Thursday after magistrates found him guilty of paying illicit contributions

worth \$90,000 to the now-discredited Christian Democrats, funds he said were a personal contribution. However, the court found that he had paid the money to secure a garbage-removal contract.

The sentencing came only days after the prime minister himself was interrogated for seven hours by the Milan magistrates, who, over the last three years, have uncovered Italy's huge bribery scandals.

After being questioned, Mr. Berlusconi said the magistrates had produced no evidence to substantiate their suspicions that he knew of bribes paid to the tax police by executives of his Fininvest empire, including his brother.

The interrogation nonetheless damaged Mr. Berlusconi politically, even as the Northern League and the parliamentary opposition, the Democratic Party of the Left, successors to the Communists, and the Popular Party, successors to the Christian Democrats, were preparing to challenge him.

Mr. Berlusconi resigned to avoid the humiliating spectacle of defeat in no-confidence motions prepared by his adversaries, who claimed the support of 325 legislators in the 630-seat lower house.

Under Italian law, Mr. Scalfaro may appoint a prime minister-designate to seek a new parliamentary majority among the array of disparate groups — from neo-fascists to hard-line Communists — who have replaced Italy's former political players.

Mr. Berlusconi, however, is pressing Mr. Scalfaro to reappoint him to lead the na-

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Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi leaving the Quirinale Palace in Rome after presenting his resignation on Thursday to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.

Kiosk

Fishing Accord Clears Entries to EU

BRUSSELS (Reuters) — The European Union, overriding British objections, agreed to a deal on fishing rights on Thursday that removed the last barrier to Austria, Finland and Sweden joining the EU on Jan. 1.

Spain had threatened to hold up the entry of the three unless the 12-member bloc kept a pledge to give Spain and Portugal access to the EU's western waters. British and Irish fishermen have fiercely resisted moves to give the Spanish fleet, the Union's largest, equal access to waters around their coasts.

They agreed, with a British abstention, to a compromise put forward by the German EU presidency under which 40 Spanish vessels will have access to the so-called "Irish box" area except for the Irish Sea and the Bristol Channel. The area is a fisheries protection zone surrounding Ireland.

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Bistro Is a Vanishing Breed as 'Le Stress' Takes Its Toll on the French

By Marilee Simons

PARIS — Henri Miquel, the owner, knows what most of his regulars want. The early-morning customers at Le Dufrenoy, his bistro, wolf down croissants and espressos, sometimes laced with a burning shot of calvados.

At midday, copious plates of beef stew or lentils with ham zip along the Formica-topped tables. Afternoons are for flirting students and lovers of pinball machines.

The after-work crowd comes in to decompress.

It seems a suitable spot to ask why the bistro, that monument of French street culture, has been declared a vanishing breed. According to Le Limonadier, the trade journal, some 4,000 bistros — France's homey cafes — are going out of business every year.

"The French lifestyle is changing," said Mr. Miquel, who has reigned over his counter for 18 years, 15 hours a day. Late-

ly, though, he has started to close at 8 instead of midnight.

"The Parisians are becoming like Americans," he went on with tangible disdain. "They're in a hurry. They buy take-out food instead of sitting down and eating in peace. At night they rush off to watch television."

The dwindling of France's cafes has become a subject of study and debate. Cafes after all have served for plotting revolutions, organizing artists' and workers'

movements, writing books, reading newspapers and forgetting one's troubles. So why, after almost three centuries of using the bistro as living room, study, game parlor and confessional, are the French now staying away?

The answer invariably includes "le stress," that plague of the new urban generation, which keeps busy schedules and leaves little time for idling over drinks, let alone for writing or playing cards.

Lunch breaks have shrunk from two or

three hours to one. "Only people who are the boss or work for the government stay out long," said Genevieve La Tortue, a waitress who has watched bistro clients in the heart of Paris for 15 years. The many people on diets are also bad for business. And there is the rise of "le cocooning," relaxing at home at night.

Behind his counter, Mr. Miquel complained that he and his fellow cafe keepers "now suffer a lot of unfair competition."

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Dow Jones	Trib Index
Up 13.12	Up 0.46%
3814.92	112.30

The Dollar	Thurs. close	previous close
New York	1.5743	1.5806
DM	1.5468	1.542
Pound	100.25	100.475
Yen	5.4405	5.451
FF		

Newsstand Prices	
Andorra	9.00 FF
Antilles	11.20 FF
Comoros	1.400 CFA
Egypt	9.00 FF
France	960 CFA
Gabon	300 Dr.
Greece	2,600 Lire
Ivory Coast	1,120 CFA
Jordan	1 JD
Lebanon	US\$ 1.50
Luxembourg	60 L.
Morocco	8.00 Riels
Qatar	8.00 Riels
Réunion	11.20 FF
Saudi Arabia	9.00 R.
Senegal	960 CFA
Spain	200 PTAS
Tunisia	1,000 Din
Turkey	35,000
U.A.E.	8.50 Dirh
U.S. Mil.	(Eur.) \$1.10

New Albania: Wishful Thinking and Exported Workers

By Henry Kamm
New York Times Service

TIRANA, Albania — The grand boulevard that is this bedraggled capital's main street has sprung to a life it never knew before. The avenue once bore Stalin's name but now has a name good for all political seasons — Boulevard of the Heroes of the Nation. It stretches from the university built in the 1930s in the Fascist style favored by Mussolini to the vast square with the dilapidated museum, concert hall and hotel in the mode of the 1960s Communist heyday.

Over the last year it has sprouted any number of shacks with a few plastic tables and chairs, inside and out, featuring espresso machines as their main equipment. They are cafés. One, the Las Vegas, has taken over the spot once filled by the Stalin Monument.

Commerce, exemplified by these cafés and street vendors, had never been a feature of the broad boulevard. It is a street not meant to be lived in but to awe the people.

In a country that has known only foreign occupation and native dictatorship, the boulevard was the translation into stone of the menacing power of Albania's harsh regimes.

Its massive buildings housed the authorities of

government and the omnipotent Communist Party, and the auditoriums for command performances of enforced enthusiasm.

The most modern of them, a museum to the glory of Enver Hoxha, the late leader, is now called the International Cultural Center, although the few occupants of its offices, devoted to commerce, do not warrant the name.

"Museum of Hoxha?" a janitor parroted a visitor's query. "His temple," he scoffed. He spoke in Italian, which Albanians of all classes learn from Italian television, this once secluded country's main window to the world.

Albanian officials and well-wishers in the resident foreign community, eager to see progress in Europe's poorest country, point to the coffee shops and bar kiosks in the capital and other towns, as a sign of growth of a private-enterprise economy and material progress.

Yes and no, said a United Nations official of long Albanian experience.

"The kiosks give a very deceptive impression," he said. "Even though they generate some income, they tell you a sad story. They are full from early in the morning till closing time. This speaks for a lot of people who are in all likelihood unemployed."

Unemployment statistics, like other data, are unreliable.

Critical Albanians say they tend to reflect wishful thinking in a capital where even such elementary things as household electricity and tap water are more often wished for than forthcoming.

Dylber Vroni, who was governor of the Bank of Albania before becoming finance minister in a recent cabinet reshuffle, said about 18 percent of the work force of 1.7 million was jobless. He is also chairman of the governing Democratic Party for Tirana and does not deny his interest in painting a positive picture.

Among diplomats, the consensus of the unemployment rate is at least 30 percent.

Even this number is misleading. About 65 percent of Albanians are subsistence farmers, now that the big collective farms have been parceled out to private owners. They are counted as employed, which is only partly true.

Nonetheless, the resumption of farming has greatly reduced Albania's reliance on foreign gifts to feed the nation.

Throughout the country one sees the wrecks of what in the Communist years was an important source of exports. They are the skeletons of large

greenhouses, their windows shattered, with no visible effort to repair them.

In the past they grew early-season fruits and vegetables, which went to Western Europe for hard currency, still Albania's principal scarcity.

In mindless rage against the collective regime, Albanians at its fall smashed many of its structures — factories, storehouses, stables, clinics, 970 of the country's 8,000 schools.

Few have been repaired. Except for stepped up residential building, sparse signs of urban economic revival are visible.

Moreover, Mr. Vroni conceded that it was uncertain whether Albania's principal money earners of the past, its copper and chromium mines, will ever resume production.

Their equipment is so antiquated that unless world metal prices rise sharply the foreign investments needed to make them competitive are unlikely to be obtained, he said.

The houses being built, like the cafés, are financed from the country's principal export — workers. Mr. Vroni said that 300,000 to 400,000 Albanians were working abroad, mainly in Greece. Virtually all work illegally at less than the going wages, but they will send home \$250 million to \$300 million this year, he said.



MOSCOW METERS — Russian motorists Thursday trying out the newfangled objects set up in the city's streets.

Swiss Budget Cutters Clip Army's Platoon Of Carrier Pigeons

By Robert L. Kroon
International Herald Tribune

GENEVA — Lack of both funds and potential invaders has forced a drastic overhaul of that hallowed bulwark of Swiss neutrality, the 600,000-strong citizen army.

Under the Swiss Army 1995 Doctrine, the militia will be reduced to 400,000, border and mountain-fortification brigades will be abolished and the accent will be on a more mobile, high-tech defense force. For starters, the air force has ordered 32 U.S.-built F-18 fighter-bombers to replace more than a hundred 37-year-old British Hawk Hunter jets, which were phased out last week.

Grounding the birds will save the Swiss government 600,000 Swiss francs (\$460,000) a year in pigeons' railroad fares, feed and 25 centimes per dove a year for upkeep expenses. Protests notwithstanding, the government says the measure stands.

The first affected will be private owners' 23,000 bird conscripts, because the army intends to hold onto its own

where private pigeon-keepers train their birds for an annual two-week military refresher course. That involves dispatching unaccompanied homing pigeons by train to some border destination, where the stationmaster releases the doves from their baskets. The birds then fly home at an altitude of 2,000 meters (6,500 feet), at speeds of about 75 kilometers an hour (47 miles per hour).

"Homing carrier pigeons mingle with other birds and are invulnerable to enemy countermeasures," says Joseph Domjan, an officially certified military pigeon-keeper. "They are as useful today as they were 70 years ago."

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German Team Gives Birth to A New Element

New York Times Service

NEW YORK (NYT) — A team of German physicists reported that they had succeeded in creating, detecting and identifying three atoms of a new element.

Although the atoms survived for less than two-thousandths of a second, scientists hailed the achievement as a landmark in nuclear physics.

The creation of Element 111 in the periodic table, with a nucleus containing 111 protons and 161 neutrons, was the latest achievement of the Gesellschaft für Schwerionenforschung (Society for Heavy Ion Research) Laboratory at Darmstadt. Last month, the laboratory reported the discovery of Element 110.

The chemical and physical properties of an element cannot be investigated during the ephemeral existence of only three atoms, but because of the number of protons in its nucleus, Element 111 falls in the same column of the periodic table as copper, silver and gold, so it is presumably a metal. The element has not been named.

The nation's 266 keepers of carrier pigeons have offered to assume the cost for the military preparedness of their birds. The Defense Department says it is impressed by the patriotic gesture, but it has not formally responded.

Even some high-ranking Swiss officers say scratching the pigeon detachments is a bird-brained decision. This year, Division Commander Hans-Rudolf Fehrlin said that modern military communications can be intercepted by the enemy or jammed by electronic countermeasures, in which case "one or preferably two homing pigeons could be highly useful."

"During World War II," he said, "pigeons played an important role in safeguarding our neutrality."

Sam Iselin, the Defense Department's carrier pigeon specialist, concurs. "A good bird can cover a distance of 950 kilometers, more than enough for a country the size of Switzerland."

Burundi Sets Curfew After Ethnic Killings

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

BUJUMBURA, Burundi — Soldiers patrolled the Burundi capital, Bujumbura, on Thursday after a surge of Hutu-Tutsi killings prompted a French government minister to voice fears of ethnic massacres on the scale of those in neighboring Rwanda.

The government announced a night curfew to try to curb violence, centered in Bujumbura's northeastern district of Bwiza, that has killed nearly 30 people.

But shooting and grenade explosions could be heard overnight coming from Bwiza, a mixed Hutu-Tutsi area from which Hutu residents are continuing to flee.

The capital's residents stayed indoors Thursday, and most business was at a halt. The French cooperation minister, Bernard Debré, said he feared Burundi might face massacres between the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority similar to those in Rwanda, where up to a million people have been killed this year.

"I hope reason will prevail but, if it doesn't, there could be 1 million to 2 million dead," Mr. Debré said in a radio interview after a visit to the country. Burundi radio, quoting Interior Minister Jean-Baptiste Manwangari, said the government had imposed a curfew from 7 P.M. to 7 A.M.

Fighting on Tuesday and Wednesday in Bwiza destroyed

at least a dozen homes and sent hundreds of people fleeing to other districts and to Zaire.

In October and November, hundreds of people in Burundi were killed in attacks by Hutu extremists and in reprisals by the Tutsi-dominated army.

The United Nations' special envoy to Burundi, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, said Wednesday

night that he believed the curfew was a positive measure.

He called on the army to use restraint in enforcing law and order and said the army and the police had not been at sufficient strength in trouble spots at times on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Burundi has remained unstable since the first democratic

ly elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, was assassinated by soldiers in October last year during an abortive coup attempt.

Power in Burundi has traditionally been concentrated in the hands of Tutsi, who make up 14 percent of the population and who control the armed forces.

(Reuters, AFP)

Liberian Warlords Pledge End to Fight

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

MONROVIA, Liberia — Liberia's militia warlords have pledged to end five years of civil war, but the accord was greeted with skepticism by many Liberians, who have seen numerous previous pacts fall apart.

The latest agreement, signed in the Ghanaian capital, Accra, shortly before midnight on

Wednesday, calls for a ceasefire from midnight Dec. 28 and elections on Nov. 14. It includes agreement on the composition of a five-member ruling council to run the country until an elected government can take over on Jan. 1, 1996.

The accord offers hope because all seven warlords signed it. But it is a pact that many

Liberians fear could allow one guerrilla leader, Charles Taylor, to mount a new siege of Monrovia, the capital.

Many also worry that this accord, like many in the past, will not hold.

"We have seen so many agreements and the killing never stopped," a local businessman said. "We will celebrate when the fighters put down their guns."

Ghana's president, Jerry J. Rawlings, who brokered the accord, was equally restrained.

"If you make it possible for your people to know peace once again," he told the warring factions, "they will remember you with pride but if you fail to restore normalcy to your country their judgment will be harsh."

Liberia, Africa's oldest independent republic, was settled by freed American slaves in 1822. An estimated 150,000 people have died in civil war and anarchy since rebels led by Mr. Taylor, a former civil servant, invaded on Christmas Eve in 1989.

The latest agreement builds on one signed by Mr. Taylor and two other militia leaders in the Ghanaian town of Akosombo in September.

(Reuters, AP)

Foul Condition of QE2 Has Cunard in Hot Water

Reuters

LONDON — Cunard's chairman agreed on Thursday to meet passengers on the luxury liner Queen Elizabeth II who threatened a mutiny after faulty plumbing and repair problems turned their holiday into a foul-smelling fiasco.

A spokesman for the shipping line said the chairman, John Olsen, would fly to New York, where the vessel was due to dock, and meet passengers planning a sit-in Friday. Many of the 600 travelers are demanding compensation after the ship set sail with its reefed and unfinished and plumbers desperately trying to repair "exploding" toilets. "It's hell on board," said a passenger, who called the ship the "QE14."

About 500 passengers were left behind in England when the Christmas cruise began earlier this week because renovations on their cabins had not been finished. After picketing Cunard's London offices, they were offered compensation.

Those who did sail were also demanding money back. Cunard insisted that conditions on the ship were not as bad as portrayed.

WORLD BRIEFS

Man Shot Outside White House Dies

WASHINGTON (AP) — The knife-wielding homeless man shot by the police in front of the White House has died after undergoing two long operations. Marcelino Corniel, 33, died Wednesday from cardiac arrest in the intensive care unit at George Washington University Hospital, the intensive care unit at a hospital spokesman said. Mr. Corniel was shot once in the abdomen and once in his right leg by a uniformed U.S. Park Police officer about 9 A.M. Tuesday after he ran across Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House sidewalk with a hunting knife taped to his arm. He was shot after failing to obey orders to drop the knife.

A New Low in Poll for British Tories

LONDON (APF) — Britain's Conservative government is more unpopular than any government at any time in British polling history, according to the latest MORI opinion survey, published Thursday. Only 8 percent said they were satisfied with the government's performance. The poll of 1,769 voters interviewed from Dec. 15 to 19 was published in The Times.

The poll puts support for the opposition Labor Party at 61 percent, compared with 55 percent a month ago, while support for Conservatives is at 22 percent, down from 24. Support for the second major opposition party, the Liberal Democrats, has also fallen, from 17 to 13 percent.

Chinese Dissident Goes Into Hiding

BEIJING (Reuters) — A leading Chinese dissident, Wang Dan, has shaken off police surveillance and gone into hiding after the police threatened to kill him, he said Thursday by telephone from an undisclosed location.

"I have a home, but I cannot go home," Mr. Wang said during the call. "I need some quiet to read books, and I cannot stand the harassment, so I was forced to leave."

The New York-based China Human Rights Group demanded that Beijing stop what it called police harassment of Mr. Wang, a former student leader of the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations that were crushed by the army.

Dublin to Release 9 IRA Prisoners

DUBLIN (Reuters) — The Justice Ministry said Thursday it would free nine convicted Irish Republican Army prisoners whose early release last month was halted by a fatal IRA robbery in Northern Ireland.

The move, which had been expected, was announced by Justice Minister Nora Owen after a review of their cases, officials said. Officials said about 30 more IRA prisoners would be released on Christmas leave.

They said those to be freed indefinitely would have to meet very strict criteria of good behavior and would be expected to report to police regularly.

Malaysia to Cane White-Collar Crooks

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Parliament has approved a law that makes caning mandatory for white-collar crimes, which are on the rise here, accounting for 15 percent of all offenses.

"The purpose of caning white-collar criminals is to shame them," Justice Minister Syed Hamid Albar said. The law provides for whipping for such crimes as embezzlement, tax fraud and bribery.

The bill also eliminates jury trials, which were being used only for first-degree murder cases. The whippings for white-collar criminals will not be as severe as those given to violent offenders, officials said.

Seized Uranium Is Weapons-Grade

PRAGUE (Reuters) — Final results from tests on the biggest seizure of illicit uranium have confirmed that it was highly enriched, weapons-grade material, the Czech Interior Ministry said Thursday.

The material, which the police seized from a car on a Prague street last week, was 87.7 percent enriched uranium-235, just slightly below the 90 percent level preferred by bomb makers but still of weapons-grade, a ministry spokesman said. The radioactive material weighed 2.72 kilograms (6 pounds), he said.

The police detained a Czech nuclear physicist and two citizens of the former Soviet Union when they stopped their car in Prague on Dec. 14.

For the Record

Israel has accepted Jordan's nomination of Marwan Munshar, 38, a U.S.-educated computer entrepreneur and Jordan's former Middle East peace team spokesman, as the kingdom's first ambassador to the Jewish state, Jordan said Thursday. (Reuters)

TRAVEL UPDATE

7 EU Nations to End Border Controls

BERLIN (AP) — After years of delay caused by worries about crime and waves of refugees, border controls within Europe will be eliminated March 26, at least for seven of the 12 members of the European Union.

The accord "is a historic step on the way to full freedom of movement in all Europe and means an increase in security for our citizens," the German minister of state for security services, Bernd Schmidbauer, said Thursday in Bonn.

Ministers from the participating countries — Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands — met in Bonn to complete the accord, which means that inner-European border controls that already have partly disappeared will fall away completely. Italy and Greece have said they will join when they overcome technical problems. The only EU members not in the pact are Britain, Ireland and Denmark.

The first regular Channel Tunnel shuttle trains for vehicles and passengers made the crossing between Britain and France on Thursday, arriving on schedule and taking 35 minutes for the journey. (AFP)

Spanish train engineers began a 24-hour strike Thursday, and most other railroad employees were planning to strike Friday, disrupting traffic on the Christmas weekend. The drivers, who struck Dec. 2 and 11, plan another strike Dec. 30. (AFP)

Croatia has ordered striking railroad workers to return to work under a law designed to prevent threats to national security, government officials said Wednesday. The two-week-old strike has paralyzed passenger and cargo traffic. (Reuters)

Thousands of people hoping to leave Athens for the Christmas and New Year weekends were dealt a blow by two civil aviation employee strikes scheduled for 48 hours before each holiday. The first strike was to begin at midnight Thursday, and the second at the same time next week. The action was expected to affect 70 percent of domestic and foreign flights. (AP)

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THE AMERICAS /

Frequent Use of 2 Painkillers Raises Risk of Kidney Failure

By David Brown

WASHINGTON — Prolonged or frequent use of two common over-the-counter pain medicines — including acetaminophen, the most popular painkiller in the United States — increases a person's chances of developing irreversible kidney failure, results of a new study show.

Adults who take the equivalent of more than two tablets of ibuprofen a day for seven years have roughly nine times the risk of kidney failure seen in people who take about two tablets a week, according to the report. Similar consumption of acetaminophen approximately doubles the risk of kidney failure.

In contrast, frequent aspirin users seem to be at no increased risk, wrote the authors of a study appearing in Thursday's New England Journal of Medicine.

Overall, up to 10 percent of the new cases of kidney failure might be avoided annually with more moderate use of the drugs.

But the use of pain medicine is common and kidney failure is rare. Even if the level of risk uncovered in the new study is accurate, kidney failure remains an extremely uncommon side effect of painkiller use.

There are about 190,000 people with irreversible kidney failure in the United States, with about 50,000 new cases a year. Overall, the prevalence is 732 cases per million people. Hypertension or diabetes cause more than half the cases.

The kidneys help regulate the volume of fluid in the blood, and are a crucial route for the excretion of waste products. As drugs in the bloodstream are filtered into the urine,

some can reach concentrations that damage or kill cells and, over time, destroy kidney function.

The toxic effects of some painkillers — and in particular one called phenacetin, which was pulled from the market two decades ago — have been known for some time. The new study, done by epidemiologists at the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, is one of the few to estimate the magnitude of the risk in the general population.

Telephone interviewers talked with 716 adults in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia who had recently developed "end-stage renal disease," the medical term for kidney failure requiring dialysis. They asked about their use of acetaminophen, aspirin and the family of "nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs," or NSAIDs, of which ibuprofen, until earlier this year, was the only member available without prescription. A similar battery of questions was posed to 361 adults without known kidney disease.

People with cumulative lifetime ingestion of more than 5,000 acetaminophen pills had 2.4 times the risk of kidney failure found in people with intake of less than 1,000 pills over a lifetime. For similar NSAID intake, the risk was 8.8 times higher. Aspirin use was not associated with higher risk.

Acetaminophen became available without prescription in 1955. It is sold under the trade name Tylenol, but is available generically. Ibuprofen, sold as Motrin, Advil and other brands, as well as generically, became available over the counter in 1984. A second NSAID, naproxen, joined it last January.

U.S. and Russia to Trade Nuclear Arms Secrets

By R. Jeffrey Smith

WASHINGTON — The United States and Russia have agreed in principle to give each other classified data next year on the size and composition of their nuclear arsenals.

The new spirit of openness in Moscow and Washington extends only to government channels, however.

None of the nuclear secrets is to be made public, a circumstance that has provoked criticism from independent experts that the two nations are still trying to keep the rest of the world from learning how many nuclear warheads they possess and plan to keep.

A detailed U.S. proposal for the private exchange of nuclear weapons data was presented in Moscow last week by Vice President Al Gore after extensive interagency discussion in Washington.

Under the proposal, U.S. and Russian military officials would exchange a detailed account of how many warheads each nation has made since 1945, warheads that have been retired so far, or are scheduled to be retired when the two historic nuclear adversaries fully put into effect the arms treaties they reached during the Reagan and Bush administrations.

The two nations also would say where they are storing excess fissile materials for nuclear weapons, but they would not

divulge where individual weapons are kept or say anything about weapons designs.

To accomplish the exchange, the administration persuaded Congress this year to amend the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, so that Russia could, for the first time, receive classified nuclear data that Washington has previously shared privately only with close European allies.

A similar revision of Russian rules is still pending, partly because the Russian government must first figure out how to share its own secret nuclear data for the first time with key members of its Parliament, a senior U.S. defense official said.

Other U.S. officials said the aim of the information exchange was to help build confidence in the two capitals that each military establishment was carrying out its stated plans to dismantle thousands of warheads and ensuring that the fissile materials withdrawn from those arms did not fall into unauthorized hands. Washington also wants to lay the groundwork for eventual routine inspections by each nation of the other's storage sites and dismantling facilities.

Thomas B. Cochran, a nuclear weapons expert at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental advocacy group, said "the overall numbers of weapons and amounts of fissile material ought to be made public."

Mr. Cochran charged that administration officials "want to hide a lot of this data because they are concerned that the American public will be alarmed at the number of nuclear weapons that will be retained in a reserve category" for potential activation if U.S.-Russian relations should turn sour again.

The council has estimated

that the U.S. military is planning to keep as many as 3,500 strategic or long-range nuclear weapons on reserve, in addition to the 3,500 weapons it is allowed to retain in an active arsenal of missiles, bombers and submarines under existing arms treaties. Russia may want to keep thousands more such weapons, the group states. Each nation is estimated to have

7,000 to 9,500 nuclear weapons activated now.

Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary proposed this year that the total number of U.S. and Russian warheads eventually be made public. But the senior defense official said Washington was not making the information public because "for now, what we're interested in is to get information from the Russians."

U.S. Gets Soviet Air-Defense Equipment

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A Russian military transport plane that delivered cargo to a U.S. base in Alabama earlier this week was carrying Soviet anti-aircraft and anti-missile equipment, according to Pentagon officials.

The delivery had attracted attention because a Russian An-124, one of the world's largest planes, made the delivery.

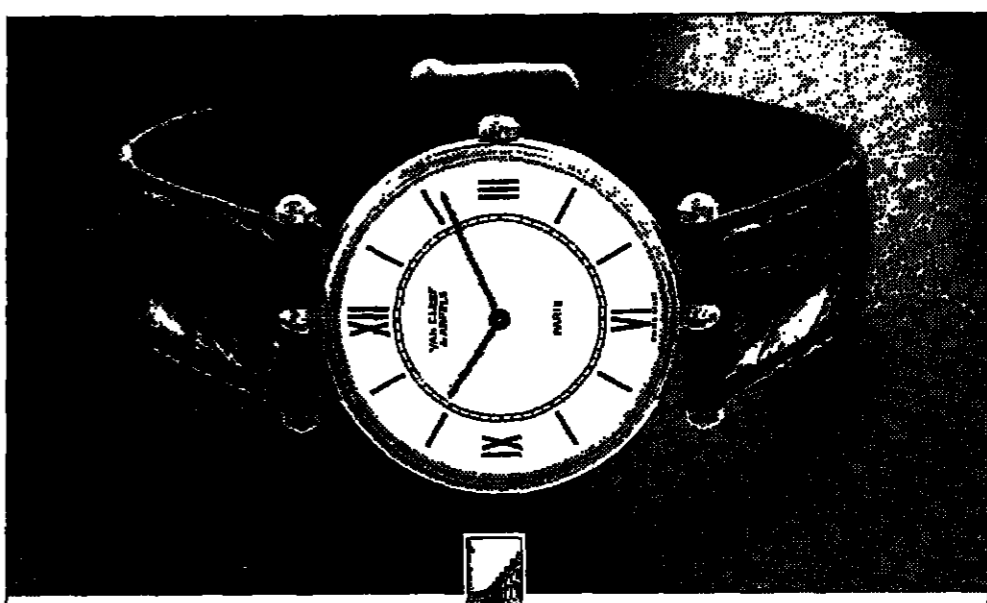
The precise contents of the plane are still classified. But Pentagon officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the plane carried air-defense technology developed by the now-defunct Soviet Union.

"None of it is nuclear and none of it is lethal," said one defense official.

The United States purchased the equipment under contract as part of a continuing effort to study in detail the capabilities of weapons systems used by foreign governments. The identity of the seller is also classified but it was probably one of the former Soviet republics.

The air-defense system delivered Monday to the Redstone Arsenal, a U.S. Army base in Huntsville, Alabama, was sold by the Soviets to foreign countries and is still in use in several of them.

"We routinely acquire foreign equipment for evaluation," another U.S. defense official said. "We study and analyze that equipment, determine capabilities and limitations, and then use that information to our benefit."



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POLITICAL NOTES

Qualified Victory for Owl

WASHINGTON — A federal judge has approved the Clinton administration's much-disputed plan for logging in the Pacific Northwest forest that is home to the spotted owl and other imperiled species.

The policy, approved by Judge William Dwyer of the District Court in Seattle, would let the timber industry cut up to a billion feet of lumber each year in the ancient forests of Washington, Oregon and northern California — less than one-fifth of the harvest during the 1980s.

In deciding one of the most hotly contested environmental issues in recent years, Judge Dwyer, who had first halted logging in 1991 to protect

the spotted owl, turned aside objections to the administration's plan from both the timber industry and environmentalists.

Judge Dwyer's ruling was seen as a victory for the administration's twin policies for handling disputes over natural resources: to seek a balance between development and conservation and to defend its decisions on the basis of scientific judgments about the workings of ecosystems, rather than on individual species. (NYT)

Gingrich Does Book Deal

WASHINGTON — Two weeks before taking over as speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich has sewed up a two-book deal worth in excess of \$4

million. Nearly all of the money is for a nonfiction book that will articulate his political vision.

Mr. Gingrich's press spokesman, Tony Blankley, would not say what his boss intended to do with the advance. He implied an unspecified amount would go to charity. (WP)

Glickman to Agriculture

WASHINGTON — President Clinton has settled on Dan Glickman, the Kansas Democratic congressman who lost a re-election bid, to be secretary of agriculture, replacing Mike Espy, administration officials said.

Mr. Glickman, 50, a nine-term congressman swept out of office in the Republican midterm wave, served on

the House Agriculture Committee and was a key figure in the writing of the 1990 farm bill, which expires this year. That legislation will be rewritten in the new Congress and that process, along with managing the cutbacks in the department begun by the Clinton administration, will be key tasks of the new secretary. (WP)

Quote/Unquote

The Democratic campaign consultant James Carville, on the reported \$4 million book deal signed by Newt Gingrich, incoming speaker of the House: "This is the first guy who tried to cash in before he was sworn in. Are you sure he's not going to give it to some orphanage?" (WP)



Mexican federal police watching a hillside from which rebels had hurled objects at lawmen in Chiapas state.

The Bishop in the Eye of Mexico's Storm

The Associated Press

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico — Bishop Samuel Ruiz kneels at an altar to the Virgin Mary, praying and fasting in a plea for peace in the southern state of Chiapas.

The 70-year-old bishop has been accused by critics of fomenting the deadly Indian rebellion that nearly led to new clashes with the army and police earlier this week after Indians briefly occupied several towns.

Indians in traditional garb,

some of whom have walked barefoot through mountain jungles, run to him and kiss his hand. Still others sit throughout the day watching him.

The bishop, who is a diabetic, has not eaten since Monday as part of a hunger strike being joined by Mexicans across the country.

"We are here in solidarity with a people who are always on a hunger strike, an unwanted one," said Sister Lidia Solorio, 52, a nun who joined Bishop Ruiz's fast. "We don't under-

stand the government. They say one thing, do another."

Bishop Ruiz wants to force the two sides, now in an armed face-off, back into negotiations. At least 145 people died in a 12-day uprising by the Indians last January.

Bishop Ruiz had been the mediator between the government and the Zapatista National Liberation Army rebels, but the talks broke down in October.

Although he has denounced the violent methods used by the

rebels, Bishop Ruiz agrees with their demands.

In Mexico City, eight people have started a fast at the Monument of Independence, along the capital's main thoroughfare. On Wednesday night, hundreds of people holding candles gathered around the hunger strikers' tents at the foot of the monument, commonly known as The Angel.

In the federal congress, dozens of deputies and senators held a 24-hour fast Wednesday to show their support.

Away From Politics

• Smoking will be restricted in nearly all public places in New York City, including a ban in most restaurants and offices, for the first time, many outdoor locations, the City Council decided after months of debate and lobbying. (NYT)

• Reports of repetitive motion injuries in the workplace continue to rise at epidemic rates despite an overall decline in non-fatal injuries and illnesses, the Labor Department says. The number of repetitive motion cases reported last year was 302,000, up from 281,000 the year before. In 1984, reported cases totaled only 34,700 nationwide. (WFP)

• A timber wolf chewed off the right arm of a 2-year-old boy who wanted to "pet the dogs" at the zoo in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Two wolves were in a pen enclosed by a chain-link fence and a wooden fence. The openings in the chain-link fence were large enough for a small child to get his arms through, but it is not clear how the boy got that close. (AP)

• A 3-year-old girl was ordered taken from the adoptive parents who had raised her since infancy after a judge in St. Petersburg, Florida, learned they were infected with the AIDS virus. Circuit Judge Horace Andrews said he did not know the couple was infected when he approved the adoption in March. (AP)

• Taunted with the nickname "Dumbo" for his oversized ears and humiliated by snowmen built to mock him, a 14-year-old boy in Bismarck, North Dakota, won a restraining order under a law intended to help battered women. (AP)

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Cease-Fire or Not, Outlook for Bosnia Bleaker Than Ever

By Roger Cohen

New York Times Service

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Nenad Tadic, a Bosnian Serb soldier, looked at the snow falling heavily on the mountains surrounding Sarajevo and said, "The weather would achieve a four-month cease-fire, with or without the politicians."

He was right. With snow falling and the weather bitterly cold, the fighting season is largely over in Bosnia. The

NEWS ANALYSIS

cease-fire announced by Jimmy Carter is therefore relatively insignificant unless it can be developed into a real disengagement of forces.

Such a disengagement, buffered by United Nations forces, took place earlier this year in central Bosnia, where there had been brutal fighting between Muslims and Croats. But in that instance, under U.S. pressure, the rival armies and politicians decided to end, or at least bury, their differences. That is far from the case in the war between the Muslim-led Bosnian government forces and the Bosnian Serbs, based in Pale, outside Sarajevo. Announcing Mr. Carter's agreement, Sarajevo Radio said it was signed by the government "and the war criminals in Pale."

Conciliation is not yet in the air. At least not among the politicians of Bosnia. Among the populations on either side there is, however, an immense fatigue that would, if it could find political expression, open the door to peace at least a crack. But politics in the Balkans does not seem to work this way.

"The war has destroyed us psychologically," said Milja Gluhovic, a Bosnian Serb in Pale who lost her husband and brother last May to a single shell that landed in their trench in the mountains above Sarajevo. "Everyone wants peace, everyone," she said. "But the prospects are dim."

In Sarajevo, an accountant named Anur who declined to give her last name said: "It is very sad when, after two and a half years, you see there is nothing left. I hate this place. I hate these people. I can never get away. I will never come back."

Such weariness, disillusionment and disgust with political maneuvering are now rampant throughout Bosnia. But the grim scheming continues unabated, and the political posturing seems particularly outland-

ish because Bosnia is still a country to be invented. Despite all the words on both sides, Bosnia-Herzegovina has no recent history as an independent state and Muslims, Croats and Serbs disagree totally as to what it is and what it should become. This was, and is still, the root of the conflict.

The Bosnian government of President Alija Izetbegovic, outraged by the Serbian campaign of terror against Muslims across much of Bosnia, wants to "liberate" the country from the Bosnian Serbs and their leader, Radovan Karadzic.

If that remains the case, Mr. Izetbegovic will try to use an eventual four-month respite from fighting to continue re-arming and building an army that has made immense strides in the last two years.

Despite the Serbian onslaught on the western Muslim enclave of Bihać, the Bosnian Army continues to put the Serbs under pressure in other parts of the country. The Bosnian government has some reason to see a long-term military trend in its favor.

Mr. Karadzic, meanwhile, persists with a dark vision of an ethnically pure Serbian entity within Bosnia, including a second Sarajevo for the Serbs.

His recent promises on improving human rights and his statements that he has "nothing against Muslims, only a deep objection to Izetbegovic's fundamentalists" cannot mask the fact that almost all Muslims in the territory held by the Serbs have been driven out or killed since 1992.

Both these political visions — Mr. Izetbegovic's of some sort of liberation and Mr. Karadzic's of a big slice of Bosnia for Serbs only — are probably impossible.

A Bosnian military victory would almost certainly take years; moreover, there would still be many Serbs left who would not want to live under a Muslim-led government. The toll of isolation that goes with Mr. Karadzic's ideas would ultimately prove crippling.

If the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Russia — the countries that make up the so-called Contact Group that has drawn up a peace plan for Bosnia — can convince both sides of the futility of this essential stalemate, there may be some chance of a real cessation of hostilities that would outlaw the effects of the winter.



Grozny residents digging Thursday for possible survivors in the ruins of a house destroyed by Russian air raids.

2 Die in Sarajevo, but Truce Seems Near

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Bosnia's Muslim-led government was close to an agreement Thursday on how to carry out a comprehensive cease-fire with Serbs, despite a mortar attack that killed two people in a Sarajevo market.

Vice President Ejup Ganic said after talks with the United Nations envoy, Yasushi Akashi, that "we hope the cease-fire will be starting more or less on schedule" at noon on Friday.

Mr. Akashi, who later went to Serbian headquarters at Pale outside Sarajevo, said the two sides were very close to agreeing on the text of a comprehensive cease-fire agreement.

He acknowledged the groundwork of former President Jimmy Carter, who negotiated the deadline with Muslim and Bosnian Serb leaders when he visited Sarajevo this week.

The UN and the Bosnian government appeared determined not to be blown off

course by the attack on the market during the morning. Two men were killed instantly and seven other people were wounded, two of them seriously.

A UN spokesman, Michael Williams, cautiously suggested the Serbs were at fault, saying, "Initial reports on the incident in Sarajevo would appear to indicate that the mortar fire came from the Grbavica area of the city, which is basically in Serb hands."

Mr. Ganic said angrily: "Nothing has changed. This is just one more example of how Serbs talk peace and make war." The Bosnian Serb army denied responsibility and accused the Muslims of attacking themselves to be able to blame the Serbs for upsetting the cease-fire.

The blast happened near the main open market in Sarajevo where 68 people were killed by a mortar in February in the worst single atrocity of the 32-month war.

The main obstacle to the cease-fire taking place is the Serbs' insistence that reluc-

tant Muslim forces withdraw from Mount Igman, west of Sarajevo, where they are guarding the only free road to the capital that Muslims control.

The Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, said Thursday that he had ordered his men to cease fire on Friday, even if Muslim troops did not withdraw.

A further complication is that the Carter and UN proposals do not include Croatian Serbs and rebel Muslims who are fighting government forces in the Bihać enclave of northwest Bosnia.

This is the only part of the country where serious fighting is still taking place and there is no guarantee the cease-fire would stop it.

The Bosnian Serb leadership also called Thursday for the suspension of international sanctions against themselves and rump Yugoslavia for the duration of the cease-fire.

(Reuters, AFP)

CHECHNYA: Heavier Bombing

Continued from Page 1

in the North Caucasus, Colonel General Eduard Vorobyov. The Defense Ministry later denied the report, calling it "disinformation aimed at destabilizing the situation in the North Caucasus."

But what gave the report added weight was an earlier claim from the chairman of Parliament's Defense Committee, Sergei Yushenkov, that General Vorobyov had asked to be relieved after refusing a request from General Grachev to take command of the military operation against Chechnya.

Moscow's increasingly blatant efforts to subvert the Chechen president, Dzhokhar Dudayev, had all failed, prompting General Grachev to boast on Nov. 27: "It would be possible to resolve all questions within two hours with one parachute regiment."

On Thursday, 12 days after Russian tank columns moved into Chechnya in great strength, with up to 40,000 soldiers and Interior Ministry troops, the military announced the deployment of two battalions, or about 800, of elite Russian marines to shore up the forward troops. There were unconfirmed reports that Moscow was also sending the elite and more historically loyal Taman division, which is based near Moscow and attacked the Russian Parliament in October 1993.

Chechen officials in Grozny

said Thursday that the Russians had begun "mass bombings of residential areas," dropping up to 60 missiles and bombs and killing more than 100 people, including 17 children.

The Chechen leaders appealed for help to the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the world community generally, while also appealing to its North Caucasus neighbors to come to Grozny's assistance with arms and aid.

The Chechen spokesman, Movladi Udogov, also said that a bomb hit the Chechen Parliament building Thursday afternoon, killing seven people. A Russian legislator and human rights official, Sergei Kovalyov, still in Grozny, said the Russians had bombed "residential areas in the center of the city." At least 12 people died overnight.

The Russian government press office denied any bombing during the early hours of Thursday morning and denied hitting the apartment buildings. Instead, officials blamed the destruction on Chechen leaders themselves, accusing them of "imitating" Russian bombs in order to make it seem that Moscow was waging war on the city.

Russian officials said that so far 20 Interior Ministry troops had been killed and 30 wounded, while at least 14 paratroopers had been killed and 36 wounded, according to the Defense Ministry.

TROOPS: Russian Morale Low

Continued from Page 1

is being transferred from the front Friday, was barely able to contain his relief. "I don't know what they're doing," he said, pointing with his chin at his comrades in arms. "All I know is that I'm not going to Grozny."

That sentiment was no surprise, given the living conditions for most of the Russian troops here.

Bed is a pile of hay under a crude lean-to. What little heat is available is afforded by a primitive wood-burning oven. Tobacco (and what Russian soldier doesn't smoke?) comes in rude-smelling little plugs in soggy packets called *dymkys*. "Fifth-class cigarettes," one teenage private said with a sneer.

The only splash of color on the icy rural landscape is the drab olive green of Russian fighting vehicles and anti-aircraft guns. There is no hot water. Troops in some units are said to be drinking heavily. At this frozen crossroads, there seemed to be little activity beyond the troops who were chipping ice from their armored personnel carrier.

During the day, the troops here buy bread and sundries from Ingush villagers, who generally sympathize with the Chechens. But when darkness falls there is the sound of shooting nearby. "At night, you don't know who anyone is," Alexander said.

SUBWAY: Bombing Arrest

Continued from Page 1

a white man, around 200 pounds (90 kilograms), between 40 and 50, burgundy sweater, dark blue three-quarter-length coat, blue jeans torn below the knees, burn marks.

The two officers looked at each other. "Wait a minute," Mr. Ruiz said. "That sounds like the guy that we have."

Less than an hour of the explosion, the police said, the man, Mr. Leary, was the target of the investigation not only of Wednesday's explosion but of a similar incident last week.

The main link between the two cases, the police said, were similarities in the construction of the incendiary devices that started both subway fires: each consisted of a glass jar about the size of a mayonnaise jar, filled with gasoline or another flammable liquid. Both had two wires leading from the liquid to a battery and a crude timer.

Mr. Leary, who was believed

to have last worked for Merrill Lynch, lived in Scotch Plains and had co-op apartments in Brooklyn.

A neighbor in Scotch Plains said it appeared that Mr. Leary had been unemployed for the last few months.

At the co-op building in Park Slope, Brooklyn, he had left distinct impressions. He was once president of the co-op board. "Ed was weird," said David Ehrlich, who served on the board with him and now lives elsewhere. "He's your classic computer person — great with machines, not so good with people."

At one point, Mr. Ehrlich recalled, the infighting over the question of spending money to decorate the co-op building grew very emotional. One day, a mysterious fire erupted outside the apartment of the leader of the pro-spending faction, who opposed Mr. Leary's efforts to keep down maintenance costs.

PESO: Markets on Edge as Mexican Currency Floats

Continued from Page 1

about one-quarter of the stock market.

"It was a disastrously botched devaluation," said Geoffrey Dennis of Bear Stearns & Co. "You can't solve deficit problems overnight, and they had to defend a rate they couldn't hold anyway. Meanwhile, they kicked the foreign investors in the teeth."

With the float, he said, Mexican officials were "acting more sensibly." They "bought more room for maneuver in domestic policy," he said, "and the currency has hit its bottom sooner."

In late New York trading, the dollar rose to 4.65 pesos from about 4.00 pesos the day before

in Mexico, and the stock market changed direction repeatedly in heavy trading as foreign fund managers scrambled to buy as bargains the shares that many others were unloading.

"Investors in emerging markets have already recognized that they have definitely swung open and are not going to close again," said Geoffrey Bell, a New York investment consultant and executive secretary of the Group of Thirty, a research group for bankers.

"What they now have to realize is that nobody can guarantee linear growth, whether in Latin America or Orange County," he added.

KOREA: Airspace to Open

Continued from Page 1

skies policy occurred less than a week after a U.S. military helicopter that strayed into North Korean airspace was either shot down or made an emergency landing, resulting in the death of one of the two pilots.

North Korea said Thursday that it was still questioning the surviving pilot, Chief Warrant Officer Bobby Hall, and charged that he had been on a spy mission. Reuters reported from Geneva, Mr. Han Chang On, a senior diplomat at the United Nations in Geneva, said his country hoped to resolve the problem of releasing the airman on a "humanitarian basis." He gave no date.

Mr. Han accused the United States of carrying out about 200 "espionage activities" against his country in November alone. About the recent incident, he said: "We warned the United States several times about not conducting such military espionage activities."

It was not clear that there was any connection between the helicopter incident and the civil aviation announcement, because North Korea appears to have made its decision on the civil aviation policy in early December.

On Thursday morning, Representative William B. Richardson, Democrat of New Mexico, brought the remains of the dead army helicopter pilot, Chief Warrant Officer David Hilemon, to Panmunjom, on the border between South and North Korea.

Mr. Richardson arrived in Pyongyang on a previously scheduled visit shortly before the helicopter went down on Saturday.

There was some speculation that Pyongyang made the announcement about civil aviation on Thursday to divert attention from the helicopter affair. But analysts said it was more likely that the announcement was timed to counter the start of direct air service Thursday between South Korea, North Korea's main enemy, and China, its main ally.

North Korea now has air service only to Beijing and Moscow and a handful of other places.

ITALY: Berlusconi Resigns His Post After 7 Months

Continued from Page 1

tion to a quick, new election. "In the interests of the country, it is necessary that the present government remains until the elections," Mr. Berlusconi said Thursday.

He said any other government installed without a new election would be a "caricature of democracy."

"My resignation is not an act of surrender," he said. "I am absolutely determined to hold firm."

It is by no means clear, however, that Mr. Berlusconi could secure a majority, even though many from the Northern League, though apparently not the majority of them, have sided with the prime minister's so-

called Freedom Alliance, made up initially of his Forza Italia, the neofascist National Alliance and the Northern League.

The three groups struck an alliance to win elections last March that were seen at the time as a watershed, but appear to have been only the beginning of a far longer and more complex transition.

"Whether it is Berlusconi or someone else who is in charge does not really bother me," said Interior Minister Roberto Maroni, who leads the dissident faction within the Northern League.

"What is important is that the government includes the League and the Freedom Alliance and is led by someone who

knows how to govern," he said.

For his part, the Northern League leader, Umberto Bossi, who has made insurgency his political stock-in-trade, and his new allies insist that a transitional government be formed of the League, the Popular Party and the Democratic Party of the Left to oversee institutional and electoral reform before any new ballot.

All three of those parties fear they would do badly in an early election, particularly against a Berlusconi campaign machine supported by the prime minister's three television networks. But such is the unwieldy and self-contradictory nature of their alliance that many argue it would soon collapse.

BISTRO: Venerable French Institution Is Endangered

Continued from Page 1

like that from the nearby butcher and the baker, who not only have begun to sell sandwiches but also sell them at prices lower than his.

Many café owners agree that high rents in Paris are making it very hard for family-run bistros to compete, especially since the big fast-food chains have now penetrated almost every neighborhood.

This summer, a "Macdo," as McDonald's hamburger places are known, opened even on the venerable Avenue Victor Hugo, that bastion of proper, bourgeois Paris.

To be sure, the bistro of old, with its checkered tablecloths, lace curtains and a waiter in a big blue apron, has been changing for some time.

Envoys From Israel And Syria Will Meet

Reuters

DAMASCUS — Syria officially announced that a meeting between the Syrian and Israeli ambassadors to the United States would be held in Washington on Thursday.

The official Syrian news agency, SANA, said Syrian and Israeli military officials also would attend the talks at the State Department.

Young Parisians, who see bistros as old-fashioned and expensive, have switched to glitzy places, forcing café owners to seek a sleek, high-tech look or turn themselves into wine bars or sell crepes or tapas.

Many establishments have dropped the tobacco license from their "café-tabac" sign because selling cigarettes and stamps meant much work and little profit.

Elsewhere in France, bistros are not doing much better.

According to the French union of *bistrotiers* and café owners, in 1960, when France had 46 million inhabitants, there were 220,000 cafés. Today's 58 million inhabitants support fewer than 65,000 cafés.

Jean Biron, who heads the union, said that above all, the nation's drinking habits have changed. "Forty years ago, the French drank 60 liters of pure alcohol per person per year," he said. "Today that has dropped to 18 liters."

Foreigners, who come to France at the rate of 60 million a year, account for most of the clientele in the famous old cafés of Paris and other cities. But the idea of the café, a convivial place with lazy, sunny terraces in summer and a warm cigarette haze in winter, still appears close to many a French heart.

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3 Ministers Quit India's Cabinet to End Crisis

By John F. Burns
New York Times Service

NEW DELHI — A crisis that threatened the political survival of Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao was defused Thursday when three cabinet ministers accused of involvement in billion-dollar corruption scandals resigned.

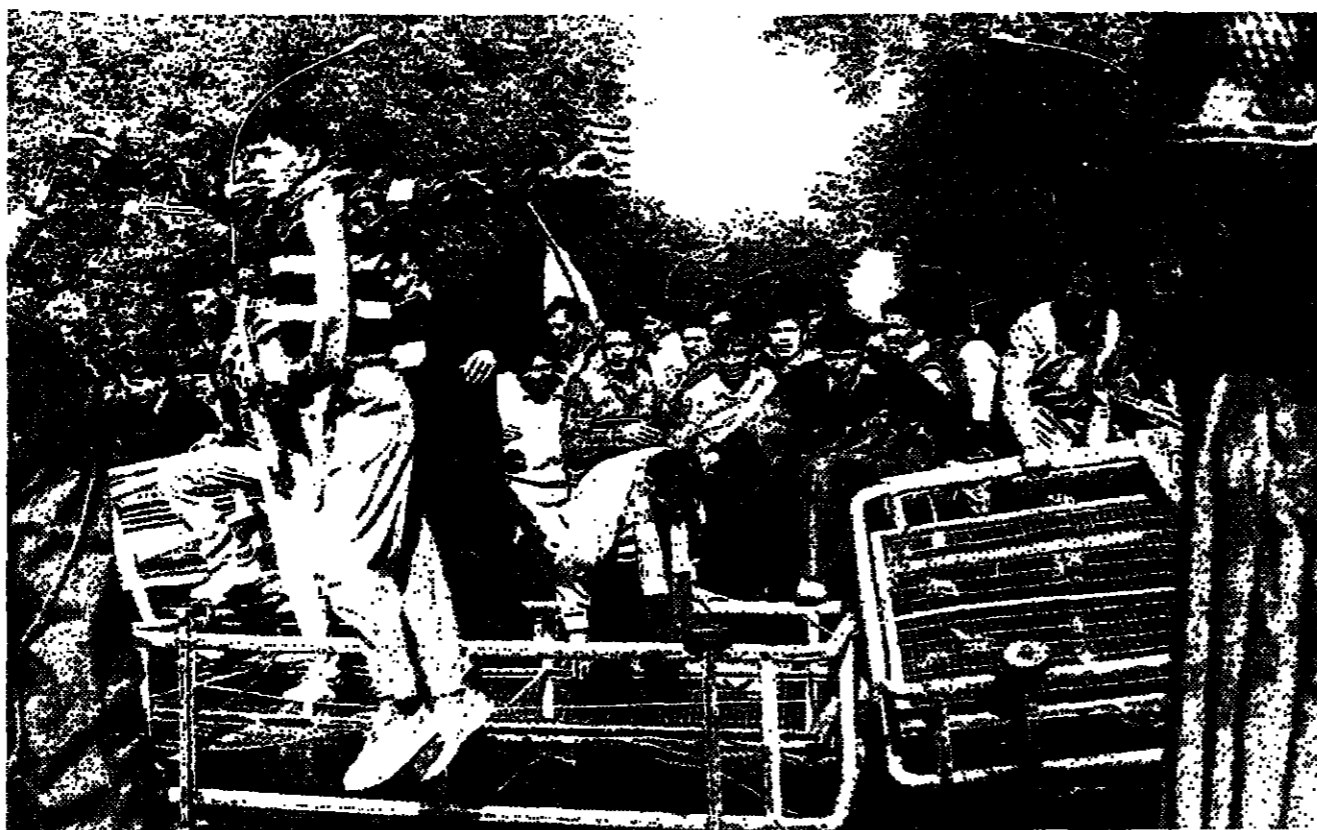
But Mr. Rao's hold on power remained shaky, and many in the governing Congress (I) Party predicted he might not last as India's leader until spring.

The resignations allowed Mr. Rao to escape, at least temporarily, from what had become a burgeoning political scandal in which his reluctance to dismiss the ministers after they were linked by official inquiries to stock market and commodities scams that netted speculators huge profits.

Indian newspapers suggested that Mr. Rao held off dismissing the ministers for fear that they might drag his name, or those of other Rao family members, into the scandals.

By quitting, the cabinet members — Baburao Shankaranand, the health minister; Kalpana Rai, the food minister; and Rameshwar Thakur, a junior development minister — gave Mr. Rao an opportunity to respond to widespread calls that he name a new, "clean" cabinet.

Leading newspapers, as well as opposition leaders, have charged recently that the Rao government was at risk of becoming the most corrupt in India's 47-year history as an independent nation.



Supporters of a campaign to carve out a new state in northern India breaking through barricades in New Delhi near Parliament on Thursday. The police used water cannon and arrested hundreds of demonstrators. They were demanding the creation of a separate state to be called Uttarakhand comprising eight hill districts in Uttar Pradesh state.

Such attacks have marked a sharp reversal in political fortunes. In his first three years as prime minister, Mr. Rao, who is 73, surprised detractors by initiating an ambitious program of free-market economic reforms that began to break up socialist monopolies built up by Congress Party governments over four decades. His efforts attracted defectors from other parties, giving the government a parliamentary majority, and were widely applauded abroad.

But the Congress Party endured crushing election defeats this month in three of India's 25 states, including Mr. Rao's

home state, Andhra Pradesh in southern India.

Party leaders voiced concern that a similar shock might be in store in five state elections that are scheduled in February, two of them in large states that are among the few still governed by the Congress Party, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

At first, many Congress leaders attributed the defeats to disaffection among poorer voters over the economic reforms, saying they considered the reforms as favoring India's moneyed elite.

But after studying exit polls taken in Andhra Pradesh and in

neighboring Karnataka, many Congress leaders concluded that the defeats were mainly caused by disillusionment among voters with what they saw as widespread corruption in the states and in New Delhi.

Mr. Rao headed off the challenge to his leadership by winning crucial support from a group of younger parliamentarians, who pledged to support him as prime minister if he rid his government of the three ministers who had been linked by official reports to the two major corruption scandals of the Rao years. It was these three ministers who quit Thursday.

Two of the ministers, Mr. Shankaranand and Mr. Thakur, had been named by official inquiries as major figures in the 1992 financial scandal, in which \$1.5 billion in government securities held by Indian and foreign banks were diverted into speculation on the Bombay stock exchange.

The third minister, Mr. Rai, was named in a government report as the key figure in delaying a million tons of sugar imports, allowing sugar companies to earn hundreds of millions of dollars in windfall profits in the first half of 1994.

Clinton Targets 9 Communities For Aid to Ailing Economies

By Guy Gugliotta
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton has designated the nation's first "empowerment zones," making six urban and three rural communities eligible for millions of dollars in federal grants and tax breaks to stimulate economic activity in depressed areas.

The urban winners are Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Detroit, New York and Philadelphia-Camden. The rural winners, eligible for \$40 million and tax breaks, were the Kentucky Highlands, Mid-Delta in Mississippi, and the Rio Grande Valley in southern Texas.

Mr. Clinton's announcement was a benchmark in the prolonged debate over how best to revitalize the nation's cities, pitting the Republican approach emphasizing tax breaks for inner-city businesses against the Democrats' belief that any benefits for businesses should be tied to an overall program of community development.

The new program marked a victory for the Democratic view and an accompanying change in terminology, whereby what Republicans called "enterprise" zones became Democratic "empowerment zones" and "enterprise communities."

Under the Clinton plan, first developed during the 1993 budget debate, cities and rural areas will receive block grants to implement 10-year development plans. Urban zones may serve up to 200,000 people and rural zones were limited to 30,000.

In addition, zone businesses are eligible for tax credits for hiring residents of the area and for expanding their activities. Congress in 1993 earmarked \$2.5 billion for this purpose.

Although the plan was developed by a Democratic administration, it tracks closely with the views of Republicans in the incoming Congress holding that local communities should have more freedom in the way they spend federal dollars. Mr. Clinton couched his announcement in the context of last week's "middle class bill of rights," and his belief that "we have got to rely on the energy and capacity of people to work at the community level."

Jack Kemp, the former secretary of housing and urban development, and the leading Republican champion of enterprise zones, pronounced the current effort "a zero-sum approach" with "not enough zones" and with "no incentives for new businesses."

Mr. Kemp noted that tax incentives apply principally to businesses already within the boundaries of the zone, an approach he said would discourage new firms from moving into the area. He also noted that zone businessmen would have an incentive to lay off outside residents in order to hire local people and receive the hiring tax credit.

"They've taken what was essentially a wonderful idea to jump start inner city economies and turned it into a rather timid, pale version," Mr. Kemp said. "It's the very same trickle-down idea of which they are so critical — it does nothing but target more federal spending."

The announcement Wednesday came after a yearlong competition in which about 500 cities and rural areas submitted comprehensive revitalization plans to a Community Enterprise Board chaired by Vice President Al Gore.

The six urban zones are eligible for \$100 million in social service grants spread over 10 years, as well as tax breaks for zone businesses. Los Angeles and Cleveland, designated as Supplemental Empowerment Zones, will receive \$125 million and \$90 million, respectively, from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

In addition, 99 other urban and rural areas were named as "enterprise communities," eligible for reduced benefits.

■ L.A. Mayor Snubs Clinton
Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles, bitterly disappointed that the Clinton administration denied his city's bid to be designated an empowerment zone, snubbed Mr. Clinton by refusing to take part in a conference call as the president told leaders of other U.S. cities how they had fared in the competition, the Los Angeles Times reported.

"I decided it would have been disingenuous on my part," Mr. Riordan said. "To make it look like I was happy about what had happened."

Ex-East German Guard Is Freed in Shootings

Reuters

POTSDAM, Germany — A former East German border guard walked free from court on Thursday after receiving an 18-month suspended sentence for shooting two people trying to flee to the West.

Prosecutors had sought a two-and-a-half-year sentence for the guard, identified only as Günter D.

New Spirit for Japan's Military Job Options and Sense of Pride Bolster Ranks

Reuters

YOKOSUKA, Japan — A new sense of pride in Japan's peacekeeping activities abroad and the chance of a stable career in a tough job market are luring Japanese youths into the military in record numbers.

It is a far cry from just a decade ago, when seeking a job in the 240,000-member Self-Defense Forces, as Japan's armed services are called, was considered an act of desperation.

The defense forces, which are barred from military attack under Japan's pacifist constitution, were still so tarnished and mistrusted from World War II days that some officers shunned wearing their uniforms in public.

Joining the military was a so-called "3K" job — *kurai*, *kitanai* and *kiken*, or dark, dirty and dangerous.

But now, recruiters are enjoying a windfall from intense media coverage of Japanese peacekeeping operations in Zaire, Cambodia, Mozambique and the Gulf.

The military life has suddenly become sought-after with the activities of peacekeeping troops regularly on the front pages of newspapers.

Japan's recession is also channeling high school and university graduates into the military as job opportunities dwindle in the private sector.

Latest official statistics show Japan's unemployment at about 3 percent, which is small by many nations' standards but for Japan an unprecedented high figure.

Commander Asao Ikeda, head of the navy's Yokosuka Training School for petty officers, said on a recent media tour that many recruiting stations around the country get as many as 10 times the quota needed for the armed forces.

This is a dramatic turnaround from a decade ago, when they had trouble filling the quota.

"Peacekeeping activities are a factor," he said, "but also many qualified youths want stable jobs that more and more they believe they can only find in the public sector."

Most of the 800 recruits who complete one of three four-month basic training courses a year at Ikeda's school are 18-year-old high school graduates, both men and women.

"We even got 19 college graduates this year and five of them were women," Mr. Ikeda said at the campus in Yokosuka, south of Tokyo, near Japan's biggest naval base jointly operated with the U.S. Navy.

At the army's Youth Technical School, also at Yokosuka, a high-school level institution to train technical sergeants, students' eyes are on travel abroad.

"I saw these men on TV, in Cambodia," said Yosuke Kubota, 16. "I thought that was very cool."

At the nearby National Defense Academy for officer cadets, also in Yokosuka, there were 80 times the number of applicants this year for the quota of 450 students.

In Eternal Dispute on East Jerusalem, Israel Forbids Palestinian Conference

Reuters

JERUSALEM — Israel barred a conference by the Palestinian development agency on Thursday and set up roadblocks around the Jerusalem hotel where it was to have taken place.

Israel and the Palestinians are locked in a dispute over the status of Jerusalem. Israel claims the city as its indivisible and eternal capital and rejects Palestinian aspirations to its eastern half.

The Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction, a body controlled by the Palestinian self-rule authority, had scheduled a conference on the role of non-governmental organizations in Palestinian development.

The independent Jerusalem Media and Communication Center said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel objected because Ahmed Korei, a member of the Palestinian Authority and a leading Palestine Liberation Organization figure, was scheduled to speak at the conference.

Witnesses said Israeli police set up roadblocks around the Ambassador Hotel in East Jerusalem to make sure Palestinians did not try to hold the conference against Israeli objections.

Samir Huleileh, a director at the Palestinian development agency, said the conference would be rescheduled. "We will make some changes to the format of the conference," he said, "spond to the Israelis," he said.

He did not go into details. Palestinian Authority members, apart from the PLO leaders, Yasser Arafat, freely come to Jerusalem on private visits. But Israel monitors Palestinian

activity closely and bars official Palestinian representation in Jerusalem.

■ 2 Held in Beirut Bombing
Security forces have arrested two people suspected of carrying out a deadly bombing that the pro-Iranian Hezbollah

blamed on Israel, Agence France-Presse reported.

The blast on Wednesday killed four people, including Fuad Moughniyeh, whose brother Imad has been widely suspected of being the mastermind behind Hezbollah's taking of Western hostages.

Saturday

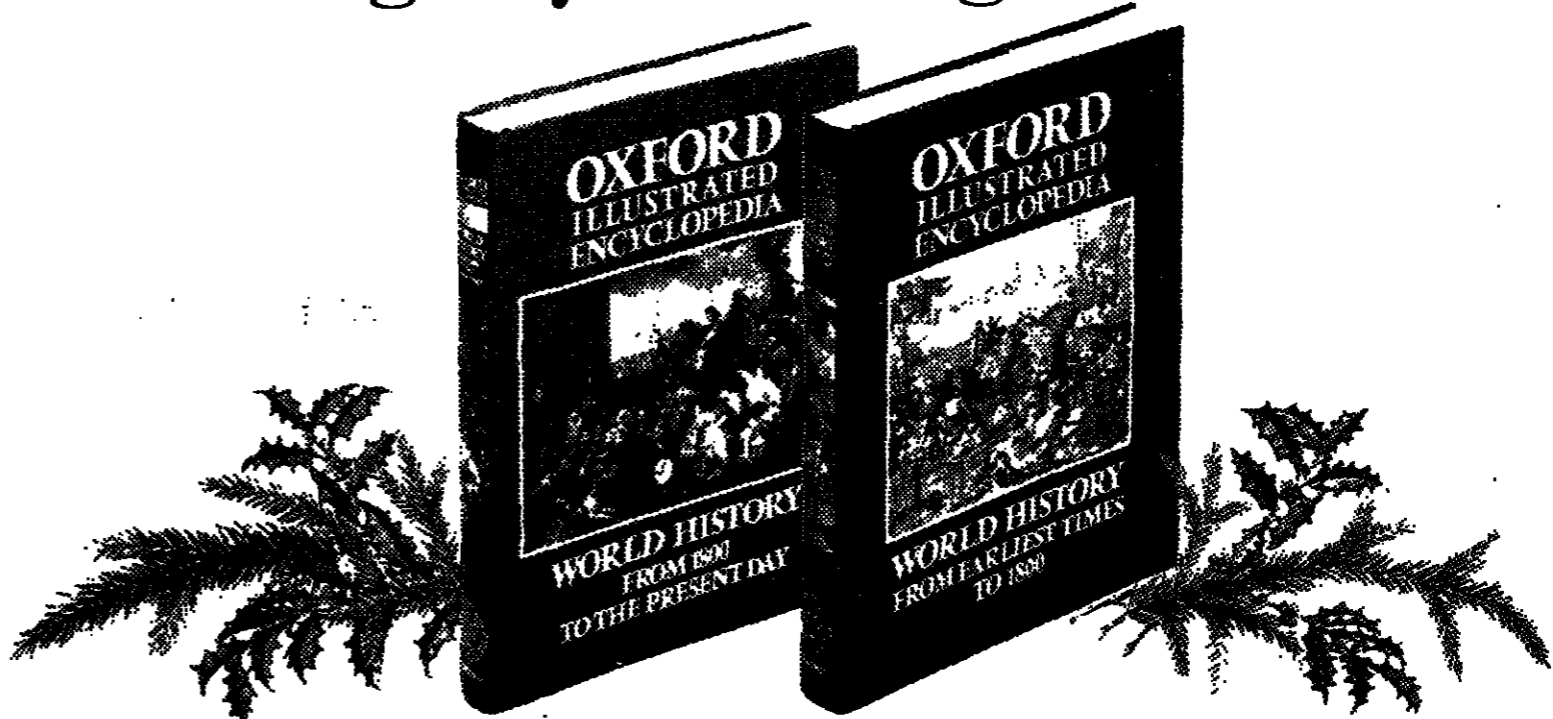
ART

Art expert Souren Melikian covers both art and auctions throughout the world in this well-read weekly column. From major exhibitions to small galleries, from impressionism to ancient pottery, this feature brings new insight for the viewer and the collector in the popular and often lucrative art world.

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OPINION

The Marxist Notion of Class Shouldn't Rule in America

By William Safire

WASHINGTON — In the White House, the catchphrase must have seemed like a good idea: Marry FDR's "Economic Bill of Rights" with Bill Clinton's campaign promise of a "middle-class tax cut" to dress up a necessary placation of the overtaxed as a "Middle-Class Bill of Rights."

But the first thing we don't need is a new assertion of economic "rights," long the basis for budget-busting "entitlements." President Clinton proposes that all taxpayers subsidize a large portion of what some taxpayers will spend on college for their youngsters.

Making tax-deductible what some spend on higher education has appeal. But by increasing demand, it

and productive as greedy Uppers? That applies political demography to outdated sociology. The divisive Marxist concept of class is social as well as economic, and Americans should never accept its confines. Class is not determined by income alone; riches can be low-class slobs and the genteel down-at-the-heels can be high-class poveritarians.

Only because the vast majority of voters are near the nonpoor, nonrich median do politicians lump these diverse individuals together in a deliciously average economic-social "class," to be flattered and coaxed. But the people with the most voting power are not a class of any kind.

The "middle-class tax cut," which is at the heart of this rhetorical meaning of America's real Bill of Rights, is the newest way of saying "Let's keep on soaking the rich."

Since the poor, who pay little income tax anyway, are not much affected by Mr. Clinton's plan, the meaning of the M. C. T. C. is plain: Exclude those nasty richies from the relief we give the deserving middle. Republicans with their own M. C. T. C. labeling, along with the politics of populist resentment.

But the evokers of class warfare are out of step with the people they purport to speak for. Most of them see the problem with taxes not as "The rich are not paying their fair share," but "We're all paying too much, especially me."

People near the median would like to keep what they earn, make the savings work for them and thereby become "upper class." Such ambition is not to be apologized for; it used to be described as the American Dream.

Central to the Clintonite exclusionary sell is that the richies stole everybody else blind in the '80s. But from 1982 to 1989, as Reaganites cut tax rates, the income of those closest to the middle rose sharply.

Another big lie is that the Republicans caused the deficit explosion. Throughout the '80s, the primary pressure to spend came from Tip O'Neill's Democrats. As tax rates fell, tax receipts rose, as supply-siders predicted, but the spending binge — insufficiently resisted by Ronald Reagan — came from House Democrats who now pretend that the Republican Party was solely responsible for quadrupling the deficit.

In Mr. Clinton's coming Republican half-term, the healthiest and fairest tax relief will be across the board, flattening rates and closing loopholes for everyone — all-class, no-class economic policy.

The New York Times

The notion that equal opportunity can be guaranteed by sprinkling college degrees on everyone is going out with the welfare state.

pushes up the exorbitant costs of college and does nothing to encourage students to work while studying. The only free-market way to encourage prestige colleges to cut costs and become competitive is to reduce subsidies and tamp down demand.

Let's say the unsayable: Higher education is a privilege, not a right, best to be earned by high-school scholarship merit and willingness to work or borrow. The notion that equal opportunity can be guaranteed by sprinkling degrees on everyone is going out with the welfare state.

The second thing we don't need is the embrace of "class" as a way to categorize American society.

Here's the current state of class warfare. To be a member of the Lower Class is to be a helpless victim of an unfair system, or a lazy bum. To be a member of the Middle Class is to be a wonderful mainstreamer, justly resentful of being put upon by the leeches below and top-hatted bloodsuckers above. To be a member of the Upper Class is to be selfish and sinful.

What kind of a warped outlook is this to apply to a quarter-billion Americans? Why let politicians patronize the poor as pitiable Lovers, lionize those closest to median incomes as long-suffering Middle, and satanize the most successful



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An Urgent Nuclear Issue

Regarding "After the Nuclear Party, Cleaning Up Isn't Optional" (Opinion, Dec. 14):

Jessica Mathews highlights some of the nuclear legacy of the Cold War — the rising stockpiles of fissile materials from dismantled warheads and all active reactors, the lack of dependable accounting and the paralyzing conundrum of nuclear waste disposition. But asserting that "the largest and most immediate nuclear threat comes from their" discounts the inherently unsafe Russian-designed RBMK and VVER reactors now running in Eastern Europe, also a part of that legacy.

High-priority financial commitments from the Group of Seven, the European Investment Bank, the U.S. Import-Export Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to retrofit safety features on these reactors attest to the urgent need to doing something with them. It is significant that the International Atomic Energy Agency has designated Bulgaria's Kozloduy plant the most dangerous in the world.

Kozloduy's reactors lack an emergency core-cooling system, containment for primary pipe ruptures and sufficient fire protection, while their pressure vessels and welds, subject to embrittlement, cannot be properly inspected. Kozloduy lacks adequate storage for its 600 tons of spent fuel — all this in an earth-

quake-active area. Kozloduy, an accident waiting to happen, is a real and immediate nuclear threat.

JOHN OTRANTO,
Executive Director,
Global Care, Munich.

A Necessary Grounding?

Regarding "U.S. Curb ATRs In icy Weather" (Dec. 10):

A French-Italian plane, the ATR, has been grounded by U.S. red tape for rather vague reasons. Of course, every time a Boeing crashes there is nothing to worry about. This shocking behavior calls into question the notion of basic free trade.

JEAN M. G. CHESNEAU,
La Croix-Valmer, France.

Soldiers and Civilians

In "Remembering the Bomb" (Letters, Dec. 7), Leslie Shenck objects to the argument that it was necessary to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki to save the lives of U.S. soldiers. She states, "I always thought soldiers were supposed to kill other soldiers."

There is no difference, with regard to the worth of human life, between a soldier and a civilian. And a nation must first and foremost do what is necessary to protect its own citizens.

Most Americans who served in World War II did so not by choice but by obligation. If it were not for

aggression initiated by Japan, they would have remained civilians.

Whether it is right or not to put a mushroom cloud on a stamp, as the U.S. Postal Service proposed to do, I don't know. But it is wrong to suggest that war is only "between soldiers." War always involves ordinary people, who are forced to shed blood because of lousy leadership.

ERLING GARATUN,
Bergamo, Italy.

The issue is not comparing the number of dead, nor is it the Japanese reaction to the war or to the U.S. postage stamp commemorating the bombings. The issue is whether we are to glorify the weapons of war.

KIYOKO IWASAKI,
London.

'Ahead of Her Time'

Regarding "A Gaffe Too Many: U.S. Health Chief Out" (Dec. 10):

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, the U.S. surgeon-general, was very clear about her job but too far ahead of her time. If teaching masturbation in school is, for the moment, too much to expect, it should at least be made abundantly clear to youngsters that the practice is normal.

It is a pity for America to have lost Dr. Elders go, and a loss for American children.

E. FROWEN,
Uithoorn, Netherlands.

The Anticipation of a Gift Retold in Bases and Altos

By Edwin M. Yoder Jr.

WASHINGTON — The Christmas tree had been trimmed and its lights set twinkling in the gathering darkness of the twilight room. "Listen!" I said to my companion. "Just listen to the des-

cant." From the stereo speakers sounded the grand chords of the grandest of Advent hymns:

Lo! He comes with clouds descending
Once for favored sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train!

Most of our ways of celebrating Christmas, as T. S. Eliot wrote many years ago, are unsatisfactory. But for me, one reliably satisfactory way is to hear again the music we reserve exclusively for this season. And nothing rekindles the spirit so well as the yearly Advent services recorded by the choristers of King's College, Cambridge.

These great works of word and song are, in their way, a protest against the distortion of a season of renewal and meditation by frantic getting and spending. They also remind us, yearly, of the neglect of Advent, the season of preparation.

Advent in its origins reflects a fascinating constant of human psychology — that the anticipation of a gift, however great or modest, is often a greater part of the pleasure. And that must be doubly true of something so astonishing as the gift of redemption to a weary and errant world.

By now, listening to the choir, we can imagine the scene in King's great vaulted chapel. The last great affirmative strains of expectation boom out in bases and altos under the embroidering descant of boys' voices. Magic.

The words they sing, should we care to notice them, are literally apocalyptic. These voices are singing of the second coming of a messiah to earth, veiled in clouds, and surrounded by saints. Those words, taken either poetically, would challenge the credibility of listeners now many centuries estranged from early Palestine — or even from the compact, earth-centered cosmos we recall from our reading of Dante and Milton.

In that earlier universe, as yet unextended by anything like the Hubble telescope, our small middle-aged star hangs majestically suspended in its central place, a little below heaven itself and serenaded by the music of the starry spheres. That comfort-

ing scheme of things gave those who lived in it a sense of cosmic importance. In such a world, the reappearance of a cloud-girded messiah must have been easier to imagine than it would be in A. D. 1994.

Not that apocalyptic interests are extinguished. Books like "The Late Great Planet Earth," with their timetables of catastrophe, are as minutely coordinated with biblical passages as the chronologies of Archbishop Ussher. They sell by the millions and are taken seriously by many. Every now and then you read of devotees gathering on hill-tops to await doomsday.

For me, however, the more subdued apocalyptic imagery of "Lo! He comes with clouds descending," magnificently sung, is a more plausible — and certainly more pleasant — substitute. We earthlings have had to gear down our sense of cosmic centrality. Our adventurous cosmology has distanced us by hundreds of light-years from the Ptolemaic universe, demoting us to a minor position in a fifth-rate galaxy, one of thousands or millions.

Yet this demotion has not diminished our human longing for a principle of transcendence, a palpable connection between our small world and the music of the spheres. The smaller our little grain of sand on the great beach of time, the more necessary it is to find a reliable link to the unseen, the ultimate, the holy.

In his book "Real Presences," George Steiner has labored heroically to put this universal longing into words and to explain why it is that music is so often found to be its mediating language. "Music," he says, "puts our being as men and women in touch with that which transcends the sayable, which outstrips the analyzable." It continues to be the unwritten theology of those who lack or reject any formal creed.

For many human beings, religion has been the music like that; and it is no mean belief. Otherwise, why exclaim to my companion as the last notes of the great anthem die away to echoes: "Heavenly music!"

Washington Post Writers Group.

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BOOKS

9 HIGHLAND ROAD

By Michael Wintrip. 451 pages. \$25. Pantheon Books.

Reviewed by
Terence Monmaney

FROM the opening of insane asylums a century and a half ago to the emptying of gargantuan mental institutions beginning in the 1960s, the care of people with mental disorders has been a recurring nightmare of false hopes, willful abuse and shuffling neglect.

In the booming 1980s, the failure to follow up on patients who had been blithely deinstitutionalized became manifest in the ragged multitudes of homeless psychotics left in the dust by prosperity's gold chariot.

Now, in this heyday of self-actualization, the issue of the homeless mentally ill comes down to "quality of life" — not theirs, of course, but ours.

The compound plight of people who are poor and insane has languished atop the heap of intractable social issues for so long that Michael Wintrip's "9 Highland Road" is a sweet surprise.

WHAT THEY'RE READING

David Brooke, the director of the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, is rereading "Portrait of Max" by S. N. Behrman, a series of interviews with Max Beerbohm at the end of his life.

"He comes over as a delightful character, an amusing dandy like some of the cartoons he drew." (John Brunton, IHT)



The author, now the deputy metropolitan editor for regional news at The New York Times, spent two years observing the comings and goings at a government-financed group home for the mentally ill in suburban Long Island.

In the past, crusading journalists who ventured into the mental-health-care system revealed it to be a disaster, a snake pit. Wintrip produced something wonderfully different: an expose of progress.

He was there from the start, reporting on the fracas that arose when the health authorities first proposed converting a

house on a leafy Glen Cove street into a supervised residence for a dozen mentally ill adults. Neighbors formed a "civic association" to oppose it. A local chiropractor led the attack, hinting darkly that a school bus stop was nearby and the residents might be dangerous. The mayor said privately that he would back the home, then came out against it. The town hired a powerful law firm to block the project in court.

After a delay of nearly two years, the residence at 9 Highland Road finally opened, thanks largely to state laws that protect such facilities and to the persistence of a social worker named Linda Slezak, the home's director.

Wintrip does not hide his admiration for Slezak, who granted him full access to the home, and she is a convincing heroine, racing up and down Long Island to battle angry citizens, inert bureaucrats and roboshiniks.

Wintrip conveys the group home's workings in bracing detail, down to the five-in-counselors' meager \$16,640-a-year starting salary and the kilowatts the place used.

As a rule, the residents were sufficiently competent to get along outside a hospital but not

sure-footed enough to make it on their own. Counselors and social workers ran group meetings, doled out the residents' medications, helped organize their daytime activities and otherwise guided their tentative forays into the world.

When illnesses flared into crises, counselors ushered residents to hospitals and saved their beds at 9 Highland Road until the storms passed.

Wintrip easily convinces us that a group home provides the "most humane" treatment for mentally ill people, but we still wonder how often it succeeds.

Still, there's no doubt that the group home is the best approach and happily among the cheapest. It costs taxpayers \$35,000 a year to care for someone in a group home, compared with \$120,000 in a state hospital, Wintrip reports.

This apparent savings is no reason to cut government mental health budgets, only to transfer the vast sums long controlled by state mental institutions to community-based programs.

This ground-breaking, impassioned expose will change the way you look at mental illness itself, not to mention community-based mental health care. It's one of those rare investigations that should prompt Congress to pound the gavel and get to the bottom of this incredible use of taxpayer money.

The workers at 9 Highland Road should be summoned to Washington and held accountable for their actions. Then they should be given a ticker-tape parade.

Terence Monmaney, who has covered science for The New Yorker and is the writer of "Asylum," a documentary film about caring for the mentally ill, wrote this for The New York Times.

BRIDGE

By Alan Truscott

TWO strong teams tied in the 64-deal final of the first National Championship for seniors, and a playoff was won by Richard Hunt, John Sutherland, Dan Morse, Zeke Jabbar, Russ Arnold and Chuck Said.

The losers of the late-night playoff were Hamish Bennett, Joan Remy, William Esberg, Howard Hertzberg, Robert Ryder and Duncan Phillip. Esberg as South brought home four hearts on the diagramed deal from the semifinal stage.

A diamond was led and the ace was held up for one round. South's remaining diamond was ruffed, and a heart was led to the king. This revealed the

NORTH		WEST		EAST	
♠ A J 5		♠ Q 10 3		♠ 9 8 7 2	
♥ 9 7 4 3		♥ A 10 8 5 2		♥ K Q 10 9 5	
♦ 6 2		♦ J 4 3		♦ 9 7 5 2	
♣ A J 8 6		♣ Q 10			
SOUTH (D)		WEST		EAST	
♠ K 6		♠ 9 7		♠ 9 7	
♥ K Q J 8		♥ —		♥ —	
♦ A 5 7		♦ —		♦ —	
♣ K 4 3		♣ —		♣ —	

Neither side was vulnerable. The bidding: South 1 N.T., 2 ♠, 2 ♥, 3 ♥, 4 ♥. West led the diamond three.

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LEISURE

Don't Lose Expiring Flier Miles

By Roger Collis
International Herald Tribune

YOU have (just about) developed a strategy for acquiring frequent-flier miles — the right mix of programs, which airlines you fly, how you pay, which phone card you use, which rental car you drive. Congratulations. What you need now is a strategy for spending your miles before they expire.

Use them or lose them is the message for frequent fliers in 1995 as airlines bring in stiff new rules that make it harder to earn miles by raising award levels along with stricter time limits for redeeming mileage points. There's no expiry date (so far) for miles earned on USAir, Continental and TWA. Delta Air Lines' new Skymiles (effective May 1, 1995) will expire three years after your last Delta flight.

Dec. 31 is the deadline with many airlines for cashing in miles earned over the past three years. On Alaska Airlines, America West, American, Delta, Northwest and United, miles earned before 1992 will expire at the end of 1994. Many major FFPs will make changes during the first six months of 1995. Airlines such as American, United and USAir have raised the award level for domestic U.S. round-trip coach tickets from 20,000 to 25,000 miles; Alaska will require 20,000 miles instead of 15,000. United, Northwest, Continental and America West are raising award levels for international travel by up to 20,000 miles. Some airlines have dropped the minimum mileage per trip for which they will credit you from 1,000 miles to 750 or 500. Watch out for more blackout dates when award travel is not allowed, and more seat limitations on certain flights.

Upgrades will be harder to get, even for some "elite-level" fliers. For example, USAir's elite-level fliers can currently get a one-way upgrade for 10,000 miles no matter how long the flight: From Jan. 1, they will have to use 10,000 miles for every 800 miles they fly — which can double the number of bonus miles they need. Continental no longer allows its top One-Pass members a free upgrade when they fly on restricted fares.

Asian and European airlines are less generous with upgrades (except for elite-level fliers) and expire mileage credits typically after two years — although not necessarily in sync with their U.S. partners. With Japan Airlines, for example, mileage earned during 1993 and 1994 must be used by Dec. 31, 1995. From January, JAL's FFP members can earn and redeem mileage on American Airlines' AAdvantage program and vice versa — so travelers facing mileage deadlines could switch from one program to the other. British Airways' Air Miles expire after five years.

Airlines are raising the hurdles because

of the meteoric rise in FFP membership, with more than 120 million people signed up worldwide, and the contingent liability if everyone cashed in their miles at the same time. Fundists reckon that there are enough unredeemed frequent-flier miles floating around the system to fill 600,000 747s.

"Nine percent of passengers on American Airlines flights are traveling on free tickets in all classes — which is about the limit for serious concern," says Tony Clarke, managing director of International Customer Loyalty Programmes in London. "This is why U.S. carriers are reduc-

The Frequent Traveler

ing the value of the miles, making redemption more difficult and imposing stricter time limits. They don't want to keep that liability on their books."

Most airlines give extra perks and privileges — such as access to a lounge (which ever class you fly), priority wait-listing, special reservation phone numbers, bonus miles and sometimes free upgrades — to travelers who reach elite status. Typically, you'll need at least 30,000 actual miles to reach the first level. Programs worth going for are Silver memberships of BA Executive Club (25,000 credit miles) which gives you the run of lounges worldwide; Northwest WorldPerks Gold (60,000 credit miles) gives unlimited confirmed upgrades on any fare; United Mileage Plus (100,000 actual miles) offers upgrades, bonuses and a special lounge; JAL Global Club (60,000 miles or 80 flights) brings coupons for free nights at Nikko Hotels, standby upgrade certificates, and use of lounges; and Cathay's Marco Polo Club (40,000 kilometers in six months) which provides upgrades, lounges and hotel discounts. Delta Gold Medallion members (60,000 credit miles) earn double miles for every flight.

One way to salvage miles that are about to expire is to redeem them even if you aren't planning an immediate trip. This is

possible with most airlines, although rules vary. For example, as an AAdvantage member with miles about to expire on Dec. 31, 1994, you could request an award certificate at the last minute, which would allow you another year in which to request a ticket. You could then gain an additional year by postponing the date of your award ticket, which means you could actually fly as late as December 1996. Another device is to get your award combined with new miles for a higher level award, thus receiving another award certificate. In theory you could go on doing this indefinitely.

You may want to spend surplus miles on hotel nights or merchandise. JAL, for example, has a sumptuous catalogue offering a Marklin executive train set for 25,000 miles, a Samsonite briefcase for 50,000 miles, and for 100,000 miles a Royal Copenhagen porcelain coffee set, or a Nikon F-801 camera.

First there was money laundering; now there is mileage laundering. Hilton HHonors' new Reward Exchange program allows members to exchange airline miles in Alaska Mileage Plan, Delta Frequent Flyer, America West Flight Fund or United Mileage Plus for HHonors points, which have no expiry date, and vice versa, effectively beating most of the new expiry rules imposed by airlines. HHonors members can thus launder airline miles through the hotel program back into participating airlines' FFPs.

YOU could theoretically convert Alaska Mileage Plan miles into United miles. But as with money laundering there is a premium to pay: 5,000 airline miles equals 10,000 HHonors points — which can only be exchanged back again for 1,500 airline miles. Hilton's intention is not to devalue miles. You need only spend \$1,000 at Hilton to earn 10,000 points — the point being that, if you have more Hilton points than you need, you can exchange them to top up the last few airline miles you need for an award on a partner carrier. Hilton/Conrad HHonors Reward Exchange is valid until Dec. 31, 1995. You can also trade American Express Membership Miles for HHonors points in the plan.

Anyone who wants to make the most of FFPs should subscribe to Inside Flyer, a monthly magazine edited and published by FFP guru Randy Petersen. The magazine tracks frequent-flier programs and keeps you up to date on changing conditions. Inside Flyer costs \$33 a year in the United States (\$38 elsewhere) from (1-719) 597-8880 (fax 597-6855). Petersen also publishes the Official Flyer Guidebook, 368 pages of detailed information on 53 FFPs worldwide. Price: \$19.90 (including P&P) from Inside Flyer, 4715-C Town Center Drive, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80916-4709. Frequent Flyer Services, (1-719) 597-8893, keeps track of your mileage in FFPs.

HEAR THIS

■ A better mousetrap for sure: Specialized Bicycle Components, a California company, is working on making a bike with a motor. Matthew Wald of The New York Times tells us. Whenever the going gets too rough (or steep), the battery-powered electric motor gives you a little extra energy. If you let the motor do all the pedaling, however, the battery only lasts 15 minutes. The company hopes to market the bike in 1996, for about \$800.

AT A GLANCE: GOOD TRAVEL DEALS

Carrier/Hotel	Location	Deal
AIR CANADA	Britain to Canada	Save up to £1,750 (\$2,735) on the round-trip business-class fare from London to Calgary, Edmonton or Vancouver. Fourteen-day advance purchase and 14-day minimum stay. For travel commencing between Jan. 1 and March 31.
AIR UK	Britain to Amsterdam	Buy a full-economy round-trip ticket from a provincial airport (Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Humberston, Leeds/Bradford, Newcastle, Teesside, or Manchester) to Amsterdam and claim one free night at the Golden Tulip Barbizon Schiphol. Until March 31.
GRAND HYATT ERAWAN	Bangkok	Winter Wonderland package for 14,000 baht for single, 15,000 for double (\$560 and \$600) includes three nights deluxe accommodation, airport transfers, American breakfast, use of fitness spa and late checkout till 6 P.M. Until Feb. 28.
LAUDA AIR	London to Vienna	Round-trip business class-fare of £379 (\$590) saves £105 off BA/Austrian published fares.
LUFTHANSA	United States to Europe	Discounts from 10 percent to 50 percent on Miles & More frequent-flier awards. Until March 31.
MARSEILLE	Tourist Office	Two nights for the price of one at 41 participating hotels, for arrival Friday or Saturday, eight-day advance booking. Ask for "Weekend in Marseille" promotion. Tel: 91 54 91 11. Fax: 91 33 05 03. Until Oct. 31.
NEW WORLD HOTELS INTERNATIONAL	China	Winter discounts feature room rates from \$114 a night at the Jing Guang in Beijing, \$99 at the Yangtze in Shanghai, and deluxe rooms for \$111 and suites \$148 in Guangzhou. Until Feb. 28.
NORTHWEST	United States to Europe	WorldPerks members can travel to London, Paris, Frankfurt or Amsterdam with a companion for 20,000 miles plus \$299 on nonstop flights from the United States. Tickets must be purchased by Jan. 15 for travel before March 14. Not valid before Jan. 8.
RELAIS DU POSTILLON	Antibes, France	Three-night New Year package (Dec. 30 to Jan. 2) for 795 francs (\$145) per person in double room includes Continental breakfasts and six-course gourmet dinner.
ROYAL GARDEN RESORT	Pattaya, Thailand	Chinese New Year package, from 2,870 baht (\$115) for one night to 7,200 baht for three nights, includes welcome drink, American breakfasts and Chinese New Year gala dinner with show. From Jan. 27 to Feb. 5.
SAS ROYAL HOTEL	Beijing	Standard rooms for \$95 and executive rooms for \$125 a night include breakfast, a city-shuttle service and late checkout till 3 P.M. Until Feb. 28.
SONOMA VALLEY	California	Super Saver rates at 20 participating hotels and bed and breakfasts in Sonoma Valley wine country. Rates from \$55 a night. Until March 31. Sonoma Valley Visitors Bureau, (707) 996-1090.
TRANSAVIA	London to Amsterdam	Full-fare business-class passengers on last flight of the day or traveling at any time Sunday can claim a free night at the four-star Ascot Hotel. Additional nights at 25-percent discount.
VIRGIN ATLANTIC	Hong Kong to London	Passengers buying a round-trip economy ticket can claim a round-trip ticket between London and New York or Boston. Tickets must be bought by Dec. 31 for travel between Dec. 24 and March 31.

Although the IHT carefully checks these offers, please be forewarned that some travel agents may be unaware of them, or unable to book them.

OCTOBER 1995

17 TUESDAY

18 WEDNESDAY

The New France:
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The International Herald Tribune and Institut Français des Relations Internationales are convening a major new conference on the theme, "The New France: Implications for Global Business." This prestigious event will assess the new developments in France following the presidential elections and will feature key members of the new government in addition to major industrialists and finance and government leaders from around the world.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the County of Los Angeles, California, for the term of four years, commencing on the 1st day of January, 1901, and continuing until the 31st day of December, 1904:

Office	Name
County Clerk	John W. Smith
County Assessor	James H. Brown
County Treasurer	William C. Jones
County Engineer	Robert L. Davis
County Surveyor	Charles E. Wilson
County Jailor	Thomas A. Miller
County Coroner	George F. Taylor
County Sheriff	John D. White
County Auditor	Franklin B. Black
County Registrar	Edward G. Green
County Recorder	Harold A. Hall
County Controller	Arthur C. King
County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors	John W. Smith
County Clerk of the Board of Education	James H. Brown
County Clerk of the Board of Health	William C. Jones
County Clerk of the Board of Public Works	Robert L. Davis
County Clerk of the Board of Charities	Charles E. Wilson
County Clerk of the Board of Prisoners	Thomas A. Miller
County Clerk of the Board of Lunatics	George F. Taylor
County Clerk of the Board of Paupers	John D. White
County Clerk of the Board of Soldiers and Sailors	Franklin B. Black
County Clerk of the Board of Veterans	Edward G. Green
County Clerk of the Board of Widows	Harold A. Hall
County Clerk of the Board of Orphans	Arthur C. King
County Clerk of the Board of Deaf and Dumb	John W. Smith
County Clerk of the Board of Blind	James H. Brown
County Clerk of the Board of Mute	William C. Jones
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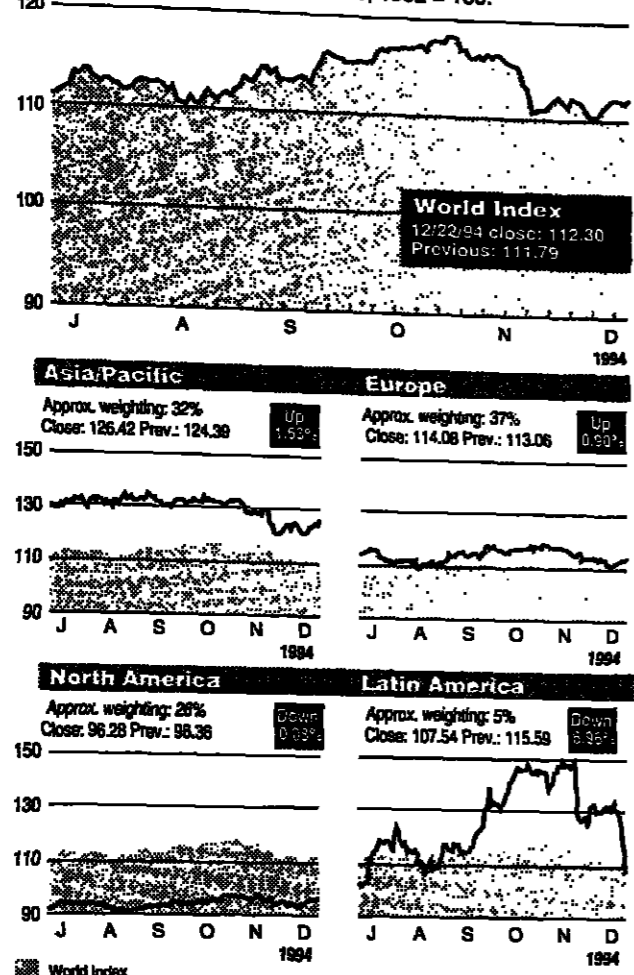
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Continued on Page 13

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THE TRIB INDEX: 112.30

International Herald Tribune World Stock Index, composed of 280 internationally investable stocks from 25 countries, compiled by Bloomberg Business News. Jan. 1, 1992 = 100.



The index tracks U.S. dollar value of stocks in Tokyo, New York, London, and elsewhere. The index is composed of the 20 top issues in terms of market capitalization, otherwise the ten top stocks are tracked.

Industrial Sectors						
	Ths. close	Prv. close	% change		Ths. close	% change
Energy	112.48	112.29	+0.17	Capital Goods	113.30	+0.40
Utilities	122.19	121.87	+0.26	Raw Materials	130.63	+0.67
Finance	113.95	112.86	+0.97	Consumer Goods	103.18	+0.06
Services	110.81	110.85	-0.14	Miscellaneous	117.00	+1.04

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Ripples Of Mexico Widen

Currency's Float Sinks Debt Prices

LONDON — The battered market in bonds of emerging economies was dealt another blow Thursday as Mexico floated its currency, and analysts predicted more volatility in debt instruments from Latin America to Russia.

Third World debt securities already had been slumping after a 15 percent devaluation of the Mexican peso Tuesday, which was largely a response to a threat of renewed insurrection in its southern state of Chiapas.

On Thursday, Mexico in effect gave up defending even the lower value of the peso by allowing the currency to float — "which scared people all the more," one trader in debt of emerging economies said.

East European debt was also hit by the sell-off.

"People are getting crushed in Latin America, and where there's an opportunity to take profits elsewhere, they are doing so," another trader said.

Concern over another insurrection, in the Chechnya republic of Russia, also weighed on the market, dragging down bonds of Russia's foreign trade bank to 26.5 percent of face value from 28.75 percent Wednesday.

The costs of quelling the North Caucasus territory's bid for independence could harm Russia's budget, but the main concern was a broader one of political volatility, analysts said.

"You can draw parallels with Mexico — there is civilian unrest, and the administration is shaky at the best of times," one debt trader said. Another added, "People are talking about the Chiapas-Chechnya factor."

Mexican par bonds slid four points in London to 54 points bid in afternoon trading. Dis-

Thyssen Is Fit to Be Wired

Steel Titan Wants to Be Phone Giant

By Brandon Mitchener
International Herald Tribune

FRANKFURT — Thyssen AG, a titan of German heavy industry with interests in steel, elevators and civil engineering, plans to become one of Germany's biggest phone companies by the end of the decade, company executives said Thursday.

Thyssen is widely considered an also-ran in Germany's booming market for telecommunications services, but Dieter Vogel, chairman of a newly founded unit, Thyssen Telecom AG, said the company was "better positioned than many imagine" and would rise to the head of the pack.

"We expect annual revenue of 10 billion Deutsche marks [\$6.36 billion] by the end of the decade," said Mr. Vogel. The company's entire 1993 revenue, of which telecommunications accounted for less than 50 million DM, totaled 33.5 billion DM.

Thyssen shares rose 7.20 DM, to 290.50 DM on Thursday.

If realized, the company's ambitions in telecommunications would propel it to a starring role in a sector that is expected to surpass car manufacturing to become Germany's most important industry, doubling in size to around 100 billion DM by the year 2003 from 50 billion DM in 1993.

Many analysts remain skeptical about Thyssen's promises, however, which they say presume a stellar performance that is costly, a long way off and far from certain.

"It might have been better to save their money, bolster their balance sheet and stick with steel," said Jenny Tora, a capital goods and steel analyst at Merrill Lynch & Co. in London, of the company's diversification.

"It's generally considered that diversification, which was fashionable in the 1970s and

Canada Slaps Excise Tax on U.S. Magazine

By Clyde H. Farnsworth
New York Times Service

TORONTO — The Canadian government on Thursday announced measures to protect its recording and publishing industries, including a punitive tax on some U.S. magazines.

The tax, which would affect Canadian issues of Sports Illustrated and possibly other magazines, could provoke direct U.S. retaliation, although such a tax is not specifically prohibited by the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Although the two countries enjoy the world's largest exchanges of goods and services, cultural tensions overhanging the relationship, Ottawa has come under increasing pressure from Canadian magazine publishers, who complain that Sports Illustrated attracts Canadian advertising that should go to their publications.

The argument that the economic health of Canadian publishing underpins a national cultural identity has high resonance here but wins little sympathy in the United States.

"We have made our feelings very clear to them at high levels," said James J. Blanchard, the U.S. ambassador to Canada. "There may well have to be retaliation or a separate, special 301. We are looking at all our options."

Section 301 of American trade law empowers President Bill Clinton to strike at imports from countries that take unfair trade action against U.S. exports.

NAPFA, which also covers trade with Mexico, exempts cultural industries from the dismantling of trade barriers. But while Canada would not violate the accord by taking discriminatory action against Time Warner Inc., the publisher of Sports Illustrated, the United States also would not violate the agreement by retaliating.

Fed Was Split on Last Rate Rise

By Keith Bradsher
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. central bank's policy-making committee was deeply divided over whether to raise short-term interest rates by three-quarters of a percentage point on Nov. 15, according to minutes of the meeting released Thursday.

While the final vote was unanimously in favor of the rate increase, a minority of the members of the 12-person Federal

Open Market Committee initially favored a half-point increase, the minutes said. These members argued that the effect of five earlier interest-rate increases this year on the economy had not yet been felt, and that such a large increase could damage consumer and business confidence.

But these members eventually went along after deciding that, "they could accept the degree of restraint preferred by the majority because of the

WALL STREET WATCH

Deriving Profit From Banks' Losses

By Saul Hansell
New York Times Service

NEW YORK — High-rolling hedge-fund managers like George Soros were the first to disclose that they lost money in the plunging bond market this year. Then came Piper Jaffray & Hopwood and other mutual-fund managers.

More recently, several municipalities, most notably Orange County, California, confessed to substantial losses from risky interest rate bets gone bad.

Now banks are coming clean. Some big ones, including PNC Bank Corp., Keycorp and Banc One, have already said they would be hurt by problems in their investment portfolios. But banking analysts said there were many more that compiled similar losses but have not yet been as forthcoming.

Analysts said it was difficult to determine which banks were hardest hit. That is because banks provide only limited disclosure about the effects of changes in interest rates on their balance sheets.

Indeed, the reason that banking losses are just starting to trickle out now — rather than in the spring when the problems at mutual funds first emerged — is not because the losses are newer. Instead, it is because accounting rules make it easier for banks to hide their mistakes.

For buyers of banking shares, the silver lining is that the expectation of this bad news has already depressed prices indiscriminately across the board. Analysts said there was an opportunity to buy undervalued banks that have not

been hurt, or may even benefit, from rising interest rates.

Analysts said many banks would face up to their losses by early 1995. They would do so by selling losing investments to concentrate the pain in one quarterly reduction in earnings.

Some likely candidates, analysts said, include the Fleet Financial Group, Boatmen's Bancshares and Huntington Bancshares. Other banks — including Shawmut National, Central Fidelity and Integra Financial — will probably not take big one-time write-offs. Instead, they may simply suffer through the next few years with depressed earnings because their credit-market investments pay low interest.

The problems could get worse before they get better. "If we see another increase in rates, we will see some more banks start to hemorrhage," said Thomas Hanley, a bank analyst with CS First Boston.

The interest-rate losses are concentrated among regional and local banks, which turned to investments in bonds when the drop in loan demand in the late 1980s and early 1990s cut deeply into earnings.

Many banks borrowed at low short-term rates to pour money into higher-yielding longer-term bonds that appeared to offer safe returns with little effort.

"It's like putting a bowl of candy in front of a child," said Frank DeSantis, a bank analyst at Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette Securities Corp. "It was there for the taking."

U.S. bank stocks have lost about 10 percent of their value as a result of the problems. Among banks that analysts said might now be undervalued is First Interstate Bancorp., which gains ground from interest rate increases because an unusually high percentage of its depositors' money is in checking accounts that do not pay interest. Thus, when market rates rise, its interest costs do not rise as fast as at other banks.

The big New York banks, such as Citibank and Chase Manhattan, also do not face sharp losses from rising interest rates, largely because their investments are more diversified than those of smaller institutions.

Even with the sketchy information that has been disclosed so far, it is clear that many banks with paper profits on their bond investments at the end of last year now have positions that are deeply in the red.

A study by Morgan Stanley & Co., which includes information not disclosed in bank statements, shows that as of Sept. 30, the value of the \$217 billion of bonds in the portfolios of 24 big regional banks had declined \$5.4 billion.



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all of our clients and friends
a happy holiday season and a prosperous
New Year.

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CURRENCY & INTEREST RATES

Cross Rates									
	£	DM	FF	Yen	S. Afr.	S. Afr.	Yen	S. Afr.	Yen
Amsterdam	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Brexit	2.335	3.545	1.545	1.714	1.334	1.334	1.334	1.334	1.334
Frankfurt	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
London	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Madrid	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Paris	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Porto	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Tokyo	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Toronto	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
Zurich	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
1 ECU	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054
1 SDR	1.784	2.724	1.195	1.334	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054	1.054

MARKET DIARY

Earnings Outlook Gives Lift to Stocks

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches
NEW YORK — Blue-chip stocks rose on Thursday as investors grew confident about corporate earnings and as money flowed out of Mexico and into American investments.

The market turmoil in Mexico, where the government decided to let the peso float after a 15

with expectations. The government revised its estimate of third-quarter gross domestic product growth to 4.0 percent annually from 3.9 percent. Initial unemployment claims rose 3,000 last week.

Cyclical and technology stocks were again leading the market higher on hopes of improved earnings in 1995.

"The auto and the aluminum should be up because the economy seems to be still pretty strong," said Donald Smith, president of Donald Smith & Co. in Paramus, New Jersey.

Auto stocks rallied as Chrysler sales at its Jeep-Eagle division climbed to a record and as CS First Boston began research coverage on Ford with a "buy" rating. Chrysler jumped 1 1/4 to 48 1/2, GM gained 1 1/4 to 39 1/4 and Ford added 1/4 to 26 1/4.

Intel, continuing its rebound from recent troubles with its Pentium chip, rose 1/2 to 63 1/4. Citicorp dropped 2 to 41 1/4 and BankAmerica declined 1/4 to 39 1/4 as bank stocks fell after reports that S.G. Warburg had downgraded Citicorp and some analysts voiced concern about banks' exposure to Latin American economies. (AP, Bloomberg, Knight-Ridder)

per cent devaluation proved insufficient, depressed Telefonos de Mexico, American depositary receipts of other Mexican companies and a few bank stocks.

But otherwise, the developments helped to boost U.S. stocks as money repatriated from Mexico went into the American market.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 13.12 points, to 3,814.92, extending the 34.65-point rally on Wednesday, although declining issues held a slight lead over gainers.

Volume on the Big Board totaled 339.67 million shares Thursday, off from 378.81 million shares on Wednesday, and Telefonos, the most actively traded share, fell 4 1/4 to 40 1/4.

Economic data released Thursday morning were in line

U.S. Stocks

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Dollar Stumbles After Traders Take Profits

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches
NEW YORK — The dollar slipped against other major currencies Thursday as investors passed to reassess the impact of the collapsing Mexican peso.

The dollar had been underpinned in recent days by a repatriation of funds from Mexico

The dollar closed in New York at 1.5743 Deutsche marks, down from 1.5806 DM Wednesday and at 100.250 yen down from 100.475. The dollar rose to 5.4705 French francs from 5.4510 and slipped to 1.3315 Swiss francs from 1.3340 francs.

The pound strengthened to \$1.5468 from \$1.5420.

But the dollar pushed to an 8-year high against the Canadian dollar despite the Bank of Canada's intervention in support of its currency.

The dollar rose to 1.3987 Canadian dollars from 1.3940 on Wednesday.

Traders said several factors contributed to the Canadian currency's weakness, including relatively steady Canadian interest rates amid higher U.S. rates, a worrisome budget deficit, and Quebec separatism.

On back of those concerns, investment has stopped flowing into Canadian instruments, said Dave Glowacki, a trader at NBD Bank in Detroit. (Reuters, Knight-Ridder, Bloomberg)

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Foreign Exchange

after the government devalued the peso late Tuesday. The Mexican currency has continued to slide since. The dollar traded at 4.65 pesos Thursday, up from 3.9870 pesos late Wednesday.

But some profit-taking before the year-end and thin trading took the steam out of the dollar's rally, traders said.

"Most people have established positions for the end of the year," said a Zurich-based dealer for a major Swiss bank. "When something is offered, people are just not ready to change their positions."

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The Dow

Daily closings of the Dow Jones Industrial Average

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Dow Jones Averages

Open High Low Last Chg.

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EUROPEAN FUTURES

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Stock Indexes

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S&P 500 1252.50 1252.50 1252.50 1252.50 +0.85

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NASDAQ

Thursday's 4 p.m.
This list compiled by the AP, consists of the 1,000 most traded securities in terms of dollar value. It is updated twice a year.

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

AMEX

Thursday's Closing
Tables include the nationwide prices up to the closing on Wall Street and do not reflect trades elsewhere. Via The Associated Press

[illegible]

12 Month High Low Stock		Div	Yld	PE	100s	52s	High	Low	Latest Ch'ge
C									
1914	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1915	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1916	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1917	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1918	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1919	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1920	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1921	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1922	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1923	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1924	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1925	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1926	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1927	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1928	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1929	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1930	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1931	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1932	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1933	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1934	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
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1943	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
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1946	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1947	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1948	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1949	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1950	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
1951	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
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1953	1294	100	5.25	8.5	14	14	1404	1404	16
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SPORTS

Again on the Brink, Baseball Players Make New Proposal

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches
WASHINGTON — Less than 11 hours before the midnight deadline the owners had set for either reaching a settlement on contract talks or imposing a salary cap, the striking major league baseball players made a new proposal Thursday.

"We've been working on something the last several days," the head of the players' union, Donald Fehr, said at 2 P.M. about 30 minutes after negotiations were resumed. "We did present a modified proposal to the owners a few minutes ago. They're looking at it and will get back to us."

The owners had voted on Dec. 15 to declare a labor impasse and implement their salary cap demands unless an agreement was reached by 12:01 A.M. Friday. Thursday's meeting was the first formal bargaining session since contract talks were broken off eight days earlier in Rye Brook, New York.

"We think it addresses their concerns," said David Cone, a pitcher for the Kansas City Royals. "We feel like we've made

another extended reach. It's a significant proposal."

The federal mediator William J. Usery Jr. had spent Tuesday and Wednesday morning shuttling between the sides.

The two sides did not meet at all during the day. Each did meet at separate locations with Usery — the players three times, the owners once — then awaited further word from the mediator, who apparently was not having a happy 71st birthday.

"We're doing everything we can to keep it going," he said late Wednesday, "but it's tough."

The atmosphere was painfully similar to that which existed just before the players struck on Aug. 12 and just before Bud Selig, the acting commissioner, announced on Sept. 14 that the World Series would be canceled.

This had followed a three-hour, one-on-one meeting Tuesday night between Fehr and Jerry McMorris, owner of the Colorado Rockies, who was designated by the

owners' negotiating committee to try to make some progress in the dispute.

McMorris appeared to have gained no more ground than Richard Ravitch, the soon-to-be former chief labor executive for the clubs, and John Harrington of the Boston Red Sox, the chairman of the owners' negotiating committee.

McMorris, too, had tried to sell the players on a luxury tax on team payrolls as a way of gaining control of salaries and labor costs. But, Fehr, speaking afterward, said: "This meeting, although friendly on a personal level and candid, leads to a candid description of our differences, which remain. That's what we talked about."

Several management sources had said they were willing to compromise on the level of a payroll tax. But before addressing that issue, Fehr had said he wanted the owners to rework the revenue-sharing agreement they came up with in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, last Jan. 18. The union's economists think the subsidies that deal would produce for small-market fran-

chises would decrease those teams' incentives to win and lower salaries.

"It's difficult because they say Fort Lauderdale is sacrosanct," Fehr said.

It took owners a year to reach the revenue-sharing agreement, and management is reluctant to revise the way their teams will split the money.

"They told us it's complicated and it's tied to Fort Lauderdale and revenue sharing," the Philadelphia Phillies' co-general partner, Dave Montgomery, said. "We say make whatever assumptions you want on revenue sharing and make us a proposal on a secondary tax."

In the only development on the 132d day of the strike, the National Labor Relations Board formally issued a complaint on the union's unfair labor practice charge stemming from the clubs' failure to make a \$7.8 million payment to the players' pension and benefit plan last Aug. 1. The board scheduled a hearing for March 14 before an administrative law judge in New York.

The board's seven-page complaint,

which under labor law is the equivalent of an indictment, covered two issues, saying the owners did not make the payment because the players had announced their intention to strike and that the failure to make the payment served as discrimination against the players, who would be discouraged from joining the union.

The board also said the owners "have been failing and refusing" to bargain with the union in good faith.

The question of good-faith bargaining will be at the core of the union's challenge to the owners' impasse, Daniel Silverman, director of the labor board's New York office, said the case would be handled on an expedited basis.

If the board's investigation determined there was cause to issue a complaint, the general counsel, Fred Feinstein, would recommend to the board that it seek an injunction in U.S. District Court blocking the owners' implementation of the salary cap. (AP, NYT)

Hockey Players Toughen Stand After Tax Talk

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches
TORONTO — The locked-out National Hockey League players have taken an even stronger stand against the owners' proposed payroll tax following a lecture from an economics professor.

Jerry Hausman of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology told 240 members of the NHL Players Association meeting here Wednesday that the tax would work much like a rigid cap in stifling salaries.

"There's no deal to be made with a tax. That's what came out of this meeting," said Larry Murphy, a Pittsburgh defenseman. "They're not going to get all the concessions we made and then lay a tax on top of it. If they withdraw the tax, the deal will be done in a day."

Although sources had said that the league had offered to take the tax off the table, the NHL's spokesman, Arthur Pinchus, denied Wednesday it had been withdrawn. A fax to the 26 teams, read by a management source, said: "The news report that the NHL has made a proposal that does not include a tax is erroneous. The last proposal the league made to the players association was Dec. 6."

Formal negotiations between the two sides broke off Dec. 6 in Chicago when NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman reintroduced the concept of a payroll tax, a new version that would tax total payrolls by as much as 25 percent if they exceeded \$18 million in the first year.

Subcommittees from both sides met last week and discussed the possibilities of a settlement with and without a payroll tax. A league official involved in the bargaining confirmed Wednesday that those discussions took place on a conceptual level without an official proposal being formulated for a settlement without a tax, at least from his point of view.

But a union attorney who was part of those talks said it was his impression that the league was discussing an authentic proposal without a tax. Several players said Wednesday that no proposal without a tax had been presented to them, on a formal basis, in writing.

The league executive, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the league remained willing to continue to discuss a settlement without a tax because the league thought it is important "not to draw a line in the sand and paint ourselves into corners."

But the league executive stressed that the league would prefer a payroll tax as part of the deal.

The tax has been the primary sticking point in attempts to end the lockout, which has wiped out the first 82 days of the NHL season and endangers the rest.

With no new talks scheduled, it appeared as if there would be no solution until after the holiday weekend.

"I do not have a plan when negotiations will resume," Bob Goodenow, the executive director of the union, said following Wednesday's meeting. "At the proper point in time, Gary and I will be in contact."

Although Stephane Richer of the New Jersey Devils has said many players would agree to a tax, those leaving the meeting Wednesday said any discussion was based on a misunderstanding about the tax.

Hausman's lecture "showed there would be a problem for each and every guy negotiating a contract," said Tom Kurvers, a defenseman for the Anaheim Mighty Ducks. (NYT, AP)

Wilkens Closes on Auerbach's Mark

By Ken Denlinger

WASHINGTON — Lenny Wilkens and Red Auerbach were raised in Brooklyn, and that's where the obvious similarity ends.

They are from different sporting generations and affect dramatically different personas. Auerbach, as forceful as a punch in the mouth and Wilkens as dignified as a tap on the shoulder.

Yet they share the rare ability to move exceptional athletes toward a common goal at the highest level of the most graceful team game, basketball.

Soon, likely before the New Year, their coaching accomplishments will intersect at a phenomenal number: Auerbach's 938 regular season National Basketball Association victories. And then the Atlanta Hawks' Wilkens quickly will have every one chasing him.

"This will be huge," Wilkens said of the victory that will push him past Auerbach. "This will top everything."

Auerbach has been waiting for this sneaker to fall, and for more years than he ever expected. Waiting in Boston initially; here in Washington of late. Waiting with a contradictory attitude that comes across as gracious arrogance. Going into Thursday night's games, Wilkens was just three back.

Auerbach is ready for the exchange of places at the top, though not without a few parting shots that will delight those who remember him — some not too fondly — as one of the great competitors in sport.

His first thought on the matter: "Records are made to be broken."

His second thought: "It's taken 28 years for somebody to break it, so I feel pretty good about that."

His third thought: "It's taken Lenny more than 20 years to do it — I did it in 20." (Indeed, when Wilkens has one more victory than Auerbach, he also will have more than 300 more losses.)

His fourth and fifth thoughts: "They play more games now. But Lenny deserves it. Hell of a guy. Good coach. Solid. I'm glad for him."

Talk about unparalleled longevity: either Auerbach or Wilkens has coached during all but three seasons of the NBA's 48-year history.

"Red and Lenny always seem a bit flexible, as far as players are concerned," said Tom Sanders, the NBA's vice president for player programs, who played for Auerbach and has observed Wilkens closely. "They let the players know they're in

charge, but they also let the players play. That's rare."

Sanders chuckled over the telephone about his old coach and said, "Red had an unreasonable interest in wanting to win every game."

"Red was a big inspiration in my career," said the Cleveland Cavaliers' general manager, Wayne Embry. "Lenny has been able to stay around at a time when many coaches don't."

Embry played two seasons for Auerbach's Boston Celtics and worked with Wilkens during the latter's seven-year tenure as the Cavaliers' coach.

In one way or another, NBA coaches and general managers have been chasing Auerbach ever since he joined the league in

"It's taken 28 years for somebody to break it, so I feel pretty good about that."

Red Auerbach

1946, in its initial season. When he retired from the bench, after the 1966 playoffs, smoking one of those postgame cigars that had come to symbolize glorious victory to his admirers and smelly haughtiness to his enemies, Auerbach had all the significant records.

Gradually, a few have fallen. Pat Riley has passed Auerbach for most playoff games coached and most playoff victories. Jack Ramsay had a chance at Auerbach's regular season mark, but fell 74 victories short. Dick Motta was the next challenger, but couldn't get past 856 victories before being fired by the Sacramento Kings during the 1990-91 season.

Once Wilkens sails past Auerbach, several others also will. In his second life with the Dallas Mavericks, Motta has a fine young team. One of Auerbach's Celtic pups, Don Nelson, is about four seasons away. Riley is about five.

Riley is the coach who may concern Auerbach the most. All the others who may pass him in total victories have winning percentages that pale in comparison to his .662. Riley's, however, is .720.

Even so, Auerbach still is the only coach to have won more than 1,000 NBA games. That's 938 in the regular season and 99 in the playoffs. Wilkens won't hit 1,000 until a few games after he passes Auerbach's regular season record. Eventually, Wilkens

and a few others will top that 1,037 mark. But no one will surpass Auerbach as the NBA's seminal figure.

From Auerbach through Wilkens, the NBA has changed so much. Auerbach had the same cornerstone players for nearly all of his extraordinary run. Wilkens has the advantage of faster and more orderly travel.

"There are a lot more teams now, not so much quality depth," said Rod Thorn, the NBA's vice president of operations and a former assistant to Wilkens. "With free agency, it's hard to get talent — and harder to keep it. But with more tools available to a coach, such as tape, there's more to do after a game."

Auerbach is 77. He had quintuple heart bypass surgery on June 18, 1993. A handball injury led to a permanently crooked right index finger. Ironically, Auerbach was only 48 when he quit coaching.

"Burned out after 20 years," he admitted. "Years ago, it was very easy for that to happen. Travel. Hostile fans. Referees. You wouldn't get the shake like you get today. As a result, you had to be fighting all the time. It was tougher on you emotionally."

Wilkins started as a player-coach with the Seattle SuperSonics in 1968-69, three seasons after Auerbach retired. He took the dual role only after some powerful persuasion from the general manager, Dick Vertlieb, and said earlier this week during a conference call:

"I never had a clue I'd be where I am."

Wilkins has a fond memory of that first season: being down to the Cincinnati Royals by four points with 28 seconds left. He designed a play that resulted in a dunk, then ordered a full-court press that produced a basket to force overtime and eventual victory.

"I said to myself: 'Yeah, I think I can coach in this league.'"

There has been just one NBA title for Wilkins, with Seattle in 1979. He called that "incredible" and added: "I want to have it again."

Wilkins says his strengths are being consistent. That includes making everyone accountable and respecting one another. Like Auerbach with the Celtics, Wilkins stresses defense.

"So far," he said, "it's worked."

Including his exceptional career as a player, Wilkins has been involved in nearly 3,000 NBA games. How could he possibly get himself so energized over such a long haul?

"If you can't turn the game loose, you've



CORRALLED — Derrick McKey slid by Toni Kukoc to score as the Pacers held the Bulls under 100 points for the fifth straight game and won, 107-99.

got problems," he said. "I've been fortunate to be able to turn loose when I leave the arena. I'm devoted to my family. I also enjoy economics, politics. I read a lot."

Wilkins deflected comparisons with Auerbach, but admitted: "I think I'm as good a coach as any... I work. Once I start on something I want to be good at it."

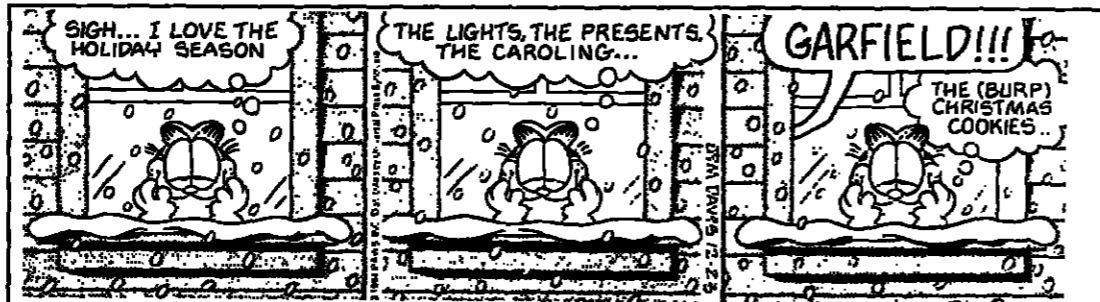
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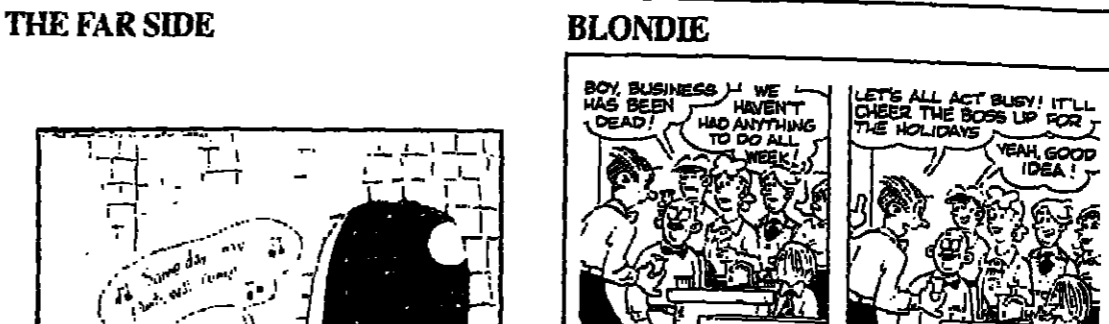
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